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# FOLK-LORE AND LEGENDS

## *ENGLISH*

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AND

# LEGENDS

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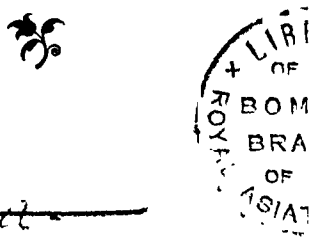
## ENGLISH



W. W. GIBBINGS
18 BURY ST., LONDON, W.C.
1890

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# INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

THE old English Folklore Tales are fast dying out. The simplicity of character necessary for the retaining of old memories and beliefs is being lost, more rapidly in England, perhaps, than in any other part of the world. Our folk are giving up the old myths for new ones. Before remorseless "progress," and the struggle for existence, the poetry of life is being quickly blotted out. In editing this volume I have endeavoured to select some of the best specimens of our Folklore. With regard to the nursery tales, I have taken pains to give them as they are in the earliest editions I could find. I must say, however, that, while I have taken every care to alter only as much as was absolutely necessary in these tales, some excision and slight alteration has at times been required.

C. J. T.

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# A DISSERTATION ON FAIRIES.

BY JOSEPH RITSON, ESQ.

THE earliest mention of Fairies is made by Homer, if, that is, his English translator has, in this instance, done him justice:—

> "Where round the bed, whence Achelöus springs,
> The wat'ry Fairies dance in mazy rings."
> (*Iliad*, B. xxiv. 617.)

These Nymphs he supposes to frequent or reside in woods, hills, the sea, fountains, grottos, etc., whence they are peculiarly called Naiads, Dryads and Nereids:

> "What sounds are those that gather from the shores,
> The voice of nymphs that haunt the sylvan bowers,
> The fair-hair'd dryads of the shady wood,
> Or azure daughters of the silver flood?"
> (*Odyss.* B. vi. 122.)

The original word, indeed, is *nymphs*, which, it must be confessed, furnishes an accurate idea of the *fays* (*fées* or *fates*) of the ancient French and Italian romances; wherein they are represented as females of inexpressible beauty, elegance, and every kind of

personal accomplishment, united with magic or supernatural power; such, for instance, as the Calypso of Homer, or the Alcina of Ariosto. Agreeably to this idea it is that Shakespeare makes Antony say in allusion to Cleopatra—

"To this great fairy I 'll commend thy acts,"

meaning this grand assemblage of power and beauty. Such, also, is the character of the ancient nymphs, spoken of by the Roman poets, as Virgil, for instance:

"Fortunatus et ille, deos qui novit agrestes,
Panaque, Sylvanumque senem, Nymphasque sorores."
(*Geor.* ii. 493.)

They, likewise, occur in other passages as well as in Horace—

"—— gelidum nemus
Nympharumque leves cum Satyris chori."
(*Carmina*, I., O. 1, v. 30.)

and, still more frequently, in Ovid.

Not far from Rome, as we are told by Chorier, was a place formerly called "Ad Nymphas," and, at this day, "Santa Ninfa," which without doubt, he adds, in the language of our ancestors, would have been called "The Place of Fays" (*Recherches des Antiquitez, de Vienne*, Lyon, 1659).

The word *faée*, or *fée*, among the French, is derived, according to Du Cange, from the barbarous Latin *fadus* or *fada*, in Italian *fata*. Gervase of Tilbury, in his *Otia Imperialia* (D. 3, c. 88), speaks

of "some of this kind of *larvæ*, which they named *fadæ*, we have heard to be lovers," and in his relation of a nocturnal contest between two knights (c. 94) he exclaims, "What shall I say? I know not if it were a true *horse*, or if it were a fairy (*fadus*), as men assert." From the *Roman de Partenay*, or *de Lezignan*, MS. Du Cange cites—

"Le chasteau fut fait d'une fée
Si comme il est partout retrait."

Hence, he says, *faërie* for spectres:

"Plusieurs parlant de Guenart,
Du Lou, de l'Asne, et de Renart,
De faëries, et de songes,
De fantosmes, et de mensonges."

The same Gervase explains the Latin *fata* (*fée*, French) a divining woman, an enchantress, or a witch (D. 3, c. 88).

Master Wace, in his *Histoire des Ducs de Normendie* (confounded by many with the *Roman de Rou*), describing the fountain of Berenton, in Bretagne, says—

"En la forest et environ,
Mais jo ne sais par quel raison
La scut l'en les fées veeir,
Se li Breton nos dient veir, etc."

(In the forest and around,
I wot not by what reason found,
There may a man the fairies spy,
If Britons do not tell a lie.)

but it may be difficult to conceive an accurate idea, from the mere name, of the popular French *fays* or *fairies* of the twelfth century.

In Vienne, in Dauphiny, is *Le puit des fées*, or Fairy-well. These *fays*, it must be confessed, have a strong resemblance to the nymphs of the ancients, who inhabited caves and fountains. Upon a little rock which overlooks the Rhone are three round holes which nature alone has formed, although it seem, at first sight, that art has laboured after her. They say that they were formerly frequented by Fays; that they were full of water when it rained; and that they there frequently took the pleasure of the bath; than which they had not one more charming (Chorier, *Recherches*, etc.).

Pomponius Mela, an eminent geographer, and, in point of time, far anterior to Pliny, relates, that beyond a mountain in Æthiopia, called by the Greeks the "High Mountain," burning, he says, with perpetual fire, is a hill spread over a long tract by extended shores, whence they rather go to see wide plains than to behold [the habitations] of Pans and Satyrs. Hence, he adds, this opinion received faith, that, whereas, in these parts is nothing of culture, no seats of inhabitants, no footsteps—a waste solitude in the day, and a mere waste silence—frequent fires shine by night; and camps, as it were, are seen widely spread; cymbals and tympans sound; and sounding pipes are heard more than human

(B. 3, c. 9). These invisible essences, however, are both anonymous and nondescript.

The *penates* of the Romans, according to honest Reginald Scot, were "the domesticall gods, or rather divels, that were said to make men live quietlie within doores. But some think that *Lares* are such as trouble private houses. *Larvæ* are said to be spirits that walk onelie by night. *Vinculi terrei* are such as was Robin Good-fellowe, that would supplie the office of servants, speciallie of maides, as to make a fier in the morning, sweepe the house, grind mustard and malt, drawe water, etc. These also rumble in houses, drawe latches, go up and down staiers," etc. (*Discoverie of Witchcraft*, London, 1584, p. 521). A more modern writer says "The Latins have called the fairies *lares* and *larvæ*, frequenting, as they say, houses, delighting in neatness, pinching the slut, and rewarding the good housewife with money in her shoe" (*Pleasaunt Treatise of Witches*, 1673, p. 53). This, however, is nothing but the character of an English fairy applied to the name of a Roman *lar* or *larva*. It might have been wished, too, that Scot, a man unquestionably of great learning, had referred, by name and work and book and chapter, to those ancient authors from whom he derived his information upon the Roman *penates*, etc.

What idea our Saxon ancestors had of the fairy which they called *ælf*, a word explained by Lye as equivalent to *lamia*, *larva*, *incubus*, *ephialtes*, we are utterly at a loss to conceive.

The nymphs, the satyrs, and the fauns, are frequently noticed by the old traditional historians of the north; particularly *Saxo-grammaticus*, who has a curious story of three nymphs of the forest, and Hother, King of Sweden and Denmark, being apparently the originals of the weird, or wizard, sisters of Macbeth (B. 3, p. 39). Others are preserved by Olaus Magnus, who says they had so deeply impressed into the earth, that the place they have been used to, having been (apparently) eaten up in a circular form with flagrant heat, never brings forth fresh grass from the dry turf. This nocturnal sport of monsters, he adds, the natives call The Dance of the Elves (B. 3, c. 10).

"In John Milesius any man may reade
Of divels in Sarmatia honored,
Call'd *Kottri*, or *Kibaldi*; such as wee
Pugs and Hob-goblins call. Their dwellings bee
In corners of old houses least frequented,
Or beneath stacks of wood: and these convented,
Make fearfull noise in buttries and in dairies;
Robin Goodfellowes some, some call them fairies.
In solitarie roomes these uprores keepe,
And beat at dores to wake men from their sleepe;
Seeming to force locks, be they ne're so strong,
And keeping Christmasse gambols all night long.
Pots, glasses, trenchers, dishes, pannes, and kettles,
They will make dance about the shelves and settles,
As if about the kitchen tost and cast,
Yet in the morning nothing found misplac't."

(Heywood's *Hierarchie of Angells*, 1635, fo. p. 574.)

Milton, a prodigious reader of romance, has, likewise, given an apt idea of the ancient fays—

> "Fairer than famed of old, or fabled since
> Of fairy damsels met in forest wide,
> By knights of Logres, and of Liones,
> Lancelot or Pelleas, or Pellenore."

These ladies, in fact, are by no means unfrequent in those fabulous, it must be confessed, but, at the same time, ingenious and entertaining histories; as, for instance, *Melusine*, or *Merlusine*, the heroine of a very ancient romance in French verse, and who was occasionally turned into a serpent; *Morgan-la-faée*, the reputed half-sister of King Arthur; and *the Lady of the Lake*, so frequently noticed in Sir Thomas Malory's old history of that monarch.

Le Grand is of opinion that what is called Fairy comes to us from the Orientals, and that it is their *génies* which have produced our *fairies*; a species of nymphs, of an order superior to those women magicians, to whom they nevertheless gave the same name. In Asia, he says, where the women imprisoned in the harems, prove still, beyond the general servitude, a particular slavery, the romancers have imagined the *Peris*, who, flying in the air, come to soften their captivity, and render them happy (*Fabliaux*, 12mo. i. 112). Whether this be so or not, it is certain that we call the *auroræ boreales*, or active clouds, in the night, *perry-dancers*.

After all, Sir William Ouseley finds it impossible

to give an accurate idea of what the Persian poets designed by a Perie, this aërial being not resembling our fairies. The strongest resemblance he can find is in the description of Milton in *Comus*. The sublime idea which Milton entertained of a fairy vision corresponds rather with that which the Persian poets have conceived of the Peries.

"Their port was more than human as they stood;
I took it for a faëry vision
Of some gay creatures of the element,
That in the colours of the rainbow live
And play i' th' plighted clouds."

(D'Israeli's *Romances*, p. 13.)

It is by no means credible, however, that Milton had any knowledge of the Oriental Peries, though his enthusiastic or poetical imagination might have easily peopled the air with spirits.

There are two sorts of *fays*, according to M. Le Grand. The one a species of nymphs or divinities; the other more properly called sorceresses, or women instructed in magic. From time immemorial, in the abbey of Poissy, founded by St. Lewis, they said every year a mass to preserve the nuns from the power of the *fays*. When the process of the Damsel of Orleans was made, the doctors demanded, for the first question, "If she had any knowledge of those who went to the Sabbath with the *fays*? or if she had not assisted at the assemblies held at the fountain of the *fays*, near Domprein, around which

dance malignant spirits?" The Journal of Paris, under Charles VI. and Charles VII. pretends that she confessed that, at the age of twenty-seven years, she frequently went, in spite of her father and mother, to a fair fountain in the county of Lorraine, which she named the "Good Fountain to the Fays Our Lord" (*Ib.* p. 75).

Gervase of Tilbury, in his chapter "of Fauns and Satyrs," says,—"there are likewise others, whom the vulgar call *Follets*, who inhabit the houses of the simple rustics, and can be driven away neither by holy water, nor exorcisms; and because they are not seen, they afflict those, who are entering, with stones, billets, and domestic furniture, whose words for certain are heard in the human manner, and their forms do not appear" (*Otia imperialia*, D. i. c. 18). He is speaking of England.

This Follet seems to resemble Puck, or Robin Goodfellow, whose pranks were recorded in an old song and who was sometimes useful, and sometimes mischievous. Whether or not he was the fairy-spirit of whom Milton

> "Tells how the drudging goblin swet,
> To ern his cream-bowle duly set,
> When, in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
> His shadowy flail hath thresh'd the corn,
> That ten day-labourers could not end,
> Then lies him down, the lubbar fend;
> And stretch'd out all the chimney's length,
> Basks at the fire his hairy strength;
> And crop-full out of dores he flings,
> Ere the first cock his matin rings." (*L'Allegro*).

is a matter of some difficulty. Perhaps the giant son of the witch, that had the devil's mark about her (of whom "there is a pretty tale"), that was called *Lob-lye-by-the-fire*, was a very different personage from Robin Good-fellow, whom, however, he in some respects appears to resemble. A near female relation of the compiler, who was born and brought up in a small village in the bishopric of Durham, related to him many years ago, several circumstances which confirmed the exactitude of Milton's description; she particularly told of his threshing the corn, churning the butter, drinking the milk, etc., and, when all was done, "lying before the fire like a great rough hurgin bear."

In another chapter Gervase says—"As among men, nature produces certain wonderful things, so spirits, in airy bodies, who assume by divine permission the mocks they make. For, behold! England has certain dæmons (dæmons, I call them, though I know not, but I should say secret forms of unknown generation), whom the French call *Neptunes*, the English *Portunes*. With these it is natural that they take advantage of the simplicity of fortunate peasants; and when, by reason of their domestic labours, they perform their nocturnal vigils, of a sudden, the doors being shut, they warm themselves at the fire, and eat little frogs, cast out of their bosoms and put upon the burning coals; with an antiquated countenance; a wrinkled face; diminutive in stature,

not having [in length] half a thumb. They are clothed with rags patched together; and if anything should be to be carried on in the house, or any kind of laborious work to be done, they join themselves to the work, and expedite it with more than human facility. It is natural to these, that they may be obsequious, and may not be hurtful. But one little mode, as it were, they have of hurting. For when, among the ambiguous shades of night, the English occasionally ride alone, the *Portune*, sometimes, unseen, couples himself to the rider; and, when he has accompanied him, going on, a very long time, at length, the bridle being seized, he leads him up to the hand in the mud, in which while, infixed, he wallows, the *Portune*, departing, sets up a laugh; and so, in this kind of way, derides human simplicity" (*Otia imperialia*, D. 3, c. 61).

This spirit seems to have some resemblance to the *Picktree-brag*, a mischievous barguest that used to haunt that part of the country, in the shape of different animals, particularly of a little galloway; in which shape a farmer, still or lately living thereabout, reported that it had come to him one night as he was going home; that he got upon it, and rode very quietly till it came to a great pond, to which it ran and threw him in, and went laughing away.

He further says there is, in England, a certain species of demons, which in their language they call *Grant*, like a one-year old foal, with straight legs,

and sparkling eyes. This kind of demon very often appears in the streets, in the very heat of the day, or about sunset; and as often as it makes its appearance, portends that there is about to be a fire in that city or town. When, therefore, in the following day or night the danger is urgent, in the streets, running to and fro, it provokes the dogs to bark, and, while it pretends flight invites them, following, to pursue, in the vain hope of overtaking it. This kind of illusion provokes caution to the watchmen who have the custody of fire, and so the officious race of demons, while they terrify the beholders, are wont to secure the ignorant by their arrival (Gervase, D. 3, c. 62).

Gower, in his tale of Narcissus, professedly from Ovid, says—

"—— As he cast his loke
Into the well,——
He sawe the like of his visage,
And wende there were an ymage
Of such a nymphe, as tho was faye."
(*Confessio amantis*, fo. 20, b.)

In his *Legend of Constance* is this passage:—

"Thy wife which is of fairie
Of suche a childe delivered is,
Fro kinde, whiche stante all amis."
(*Ibid.* fo. 32, b.)

In another part of his book is a story "Howe

the Kynge of Armenis daughter mette on a tyme a companie of the *fairy*." These "ladies," ride aside "on fayre [white] ambulende horses," clad, very magnificently, but all alike, in white and blue, and wore "corownes on their heades;" but they are not called *fays* in the poem, nor does the word *fay* or *fairie* once occur therein.

The fairies or elves of the British isles are peculiar to this part of the world, and are not, so far as literary information or oral tradition enables us to judge, to be found in any other country. For this fact the authority of father Chaucer will be decisive, till we acquire evidence of equal antiquity in favour of other nations:—

"In olde dayes of the King Artour,
Of which the Bretons speken gret honour,
All was this lond fulfilled of faerie;
The elf-quene, with hire joly compagnie,
Danced ful oft in many a grene mede.
This was the old opinion as I rede;
I speke of many hundred yeres ago;
But now can no man see non elves mo,
For now the grete charitee and prayers
Of limitoures and other holy freres,
That serchen every land, and every streme,
As thickke as motes in the sunnebeme,
Blissing halles, chambres, kichenes, and boures,
Citees and burghes, castles highe and toures,
Thropes and bernes, shepenes and dairies,
This maketh that ther ben no faeries."

(*Wif of Bathes Tale.*)

The fairy may be defined as a species of being partly material, partly spiritual, with a power to change its appearance, and be, to mankind, visible or invisible, according to its pleasure. In the old song, printed by Peck, Robin Good-fellow, a well-known fairy, professes that he had played his pranks from the time of Merlin, who was the contemporary of Arthur.

Chaucer uses the word *faërie* as well for the *individual* as for the *country* or *system*, or what we should now call *fairy-land*, or *faryism*. He knew nothing, it would seem, of *Oberon*, *Titania*, or *Mab*, but speaks of—

> "Pluto, that is the King of Faerie,
> And many a ladie in his compagnie,
> Folwing his wif, the quene Proserpina, etc."
> (*The Marchantes Tale*, i. 10101.)

From this passage of Chaucer Mr. Tyrwhitt "cannot help thinking that his *Pluto* and *Proserpina* were the true progenitors of *Oberon* and *Titania*."

In the progress of *The Wif of Bathes Tale*, it happed the knight,

> "———in his way . . . . . to ride
> In all his care, under a forest side,
> Whereas he saw upon a dance go
> Of ladies foure-and-twenty, and yet mo.
> Toward this ilke dance, he drow ful yerne,
> In hope that he som wisdom shulde lerne,
> But, certainly, er he came fully there,
> Yvanished was this dance, he wiste not wher."

These *ladies* appear to have been *fairies*, though nothing is insinuated of their size. Milton seems to have been upon the prowl here for his "forest-side."

In *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, a fairy addresses Bottom the weaver—

"Hail, *mortal*, hail!"

which sufficiently shows she was not so herself.

Puck, or Robin Good-fellow, in the same play, calls Oberon,

"——King of *shadows*,"

and in the old song just mentioned,

"The King of *ghosts* and *shadows*,"

and this mighty monarch asserts of himself, and his subjects,

"But we are *spirits* of another sort."

The fairies, as we already see, were male and female. Their government was monarchical, and Oberon, the King of Fairyland, must have been a sovereign of very extensive territory. The name of his queen was Titania. Both are mentioned by Shakespeare, being personages of no little importance in the above play, where they, in an ill-humour, thus encounter:

Obe. Ill met by moon-light, proud Titania.
Tita. What, jealous Oberon? Fairy, skip hence;
I have forsworn his bed and company."

That the name [Oberon] was not the invention of our great dramatist is sufficiently proved. The allegorical Spenser gives it to King Henry the Eighth. Robert Greene was the author of a play entitled "The Scottishe history of James the Fourthe .... intermixed with a pleasant comedie presented by *Oberon, king of the fairies.*" He is, likewise, a character in the old French romances of *Huon de Bourdeaux*, and *Ogier le Danois*; and there even seems to be one upon his own exploits, *Roman d' Auberon.* What authority, however, Shakespeare had for the name Titania, it does not appear, nor is she so called by any other writer. He himself, at the same time, as well as many others, gives to the queen of fairies the name of Mab, though no one, except Drayton, mentions her as the wife of Oberon:

"O then, I see, queen Mab hath been with you,
She is the fairy's midwife, and she comes
In shape no bigger than an agate-stone
On the fore-finger of an alderman,
Drawn with a team of little atomies
Athwart men's noses as they lie asleep;
Her waggon-spokes made of long spinner's legs;
The cover, of the wings of grasshoppers;
The traces, of the smallest spider's web;
The collars, of the moonshine's wat'ry beams:
Her whip, of cricket's bone; the lash, of film:
Her waggoner, a small grey-coated gnat,
Not half so big as a round little worm
Pricked from the lazy finger of a maid:
Her chariot is an empty hazel-nut,

Made by the joiner squirrel, or old grub,
Time out of mind the fairies' coachmakers.
And in this state she gallops night by night
Through lovers' brains, and then they dream of love!
. . . This is that very Mab,
That plats the manes of horses in the night;
And bakes the elf-locks in foul sluttish hairs,
Which, once untangled, much misfortune bodes."
(*Romeo and Juliet.*)

Ben Jonson, in his "Entertainment of the Queen and Prince at Althrope," in 1603, describes to come "tripping up the lawn a bevy of fairies attending on Mab their queen, who, falling into an artificial ring that was there cut in the path, began to dance around."—(*Works*, v. 201.)

In the same masque the queen is thus characterised by a satyr:—

"This is Mab, the mistress fairy,
That doth nightly rob the dairy,
And can hurt or help the churning,
(As she please) without discerning.
She that pinches country-wenches
If they rub not clean their benches,
And with sharper nails remembers
When they rake not up their embers;
But, if so they chance to feast her,
In a shoe she drops a tester.
This is she that empties cradles,
Takes out children, puts in ladles;
Trains forth midwives in their slumber,
With a sieve the holes to number;

[*] *English.*

And thus leads them from her boroughs,
Home through ponds and water-furrows.
She can start our franklin's daughters,
In their sleep, with shrieks and laughters,
And on sweet St. Agnes' night
Feed them with a promised sight,
Some of husbands, some of lovers,
Which an empty dream discovers."

Fairies, they tell you, have frequently been heard and seen—nay, that there are some living who were stolen away by them, and confined seven years. According to the description they give who pretend to have seen them, they are in the shape of men, exceeding little. They are always clad in green, and frequent the woods and fields; when they make cakes (which is a work they have been often heard at) they are very noisy; and when they have done, they are full of mirth and pastime. But generally they dance in moonlight when mortals are asleep and not capable of seeing them, as may be observed on the following morn—their dancing-places being very distinguishable. For as they dance hand in hand, and so make a circle in their dance, so next day there will be seen rings and circles on the grass.—(Bourne's *Antiquitates Vulgares*, Newcastle, 1725, 8vo, p. 82.)

These circles are thus described by Browne, the author of *Britannia's Pastorals*:—

". . . A pleasant meade,
Where fairies often did their measures treade,
Which in the meadow made such circles greene,
As if with garlands it had crowned beene.

Within one of these rounds was to be seene
A hillock rise, where oft the fairie queene
At twy-light sate, and did command her elves
To pinch those maids that had not swept their shelves:
And further, if by maidens' over-sight
Within doores water were not brought at night,
Or if they spred no table, set no bread,
They should have nips from toe unto the head;
And for the maid that had perform'd each thing,
She in the water-pail had leave a ring."

The same poet, in his "Shepeards Pipe," having inserted Hoccleve's tale of *Jonathas*, and conceiving a strange unnatural affection for that stupid fellow, describes him as a great favourite of the fairies, alleging, that—

"Many times he hath been seene
With the fairies on the greene,
And to them his pipe did sound,
While they danced in a round,
Mickle solace would they make him,
And at midnight often wake him,
And convey him from his roome
To a field of yellow broome;
Or into the medowes, where
Mints perfume the gentle aire,
And where Flora spends her treasure,
There they would begin their measure.
If it chanc'd night's sable shrowds
Muffled Cynthia up in clowds,
Safely home they then would see him,
And from brakes and quagmires free him."

The fairies were exceedingly diminutive, but, it must be confessed, we shall not readily find their real dimensions. They were small enough, however, if we may believe one of queen Titania's maids of honour, to conceal themselves in acorn shells. Speaking of a difference between the king and queen, she says :—

"But they do square; that all the elves for fear
Creep into acorn cups, and hide them there."

They uniformly and constantly wore green vests, unless when they had some reason for changing their dress. Of this circumstance we meet with many proofs. Thus in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*—

"Like urchins, ouphes, and fairies green."

In fact we meet with them of all colours; as in the same play—

"Fairies black, grey, green, and white."

That white, on some occasions, was the dress of a female, we learn from Reginald Scot. He gives a charm "to go invisible by [means of] these three sisters of fairies," *Milia, Achilia, Sibylia*: "I charge you that you doo appeare before me visible, in forme and shape of faire women, in white vestures, and to bring with you to me the ring of invisibilitie, by the which I may go invisible at mine owne will and pleasure, and that in all hours and minutes."

It was fatal, if we may believe Shakespeare, to speak to a fairy. Falstaff, in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, is made to say, "They are fairies. He that speaks to them shall die."

They were accustomed to enrich their favourites, as we learn from the clown in *A Winter's Tale*—

> "It was told me I should be rich by the fairies."

They delighted in neatness, could not endure sluts, and even hated fibsters, tell-tales, and divulgers of secrets, whom they would slily and severely bepinch when they little expected it. They were as generous and benevolent, on the contrary, to young women of a different description, procuring them the sweetest sleep, the pleasantest dreams, and, on their departure in the morning, always slipping a tester in their shoe.

They are supposed by some to have been malignant, but this, it may be, was mere calumny, as being utterly inconsistent with their general character, which was singularly innocent and amiable.

Imogen, in Shakespeare's *Cymbeline*, prays, on going to sleep—

> "From fairies, and the tempters of the night,
> Guard me, beseech you."

It must have been the *Incubus* she was so afraid of.

Hamlet, too, notices this imputed malignity of the fairies :—

" . . . Then no planets strike,
No fairy takes, nor witch has power to charm."

Thus, also, in *The Comedy of Errors* :—

"A fiend, a fairy, pitiless and rough."

They were amazingly expeditious in their journeys. Puck, or Robin Good-fellow, answers Oberon, who was about to send him on a secret expedition—

"I 'll put a girdle round about the earth
In forty minutes."

Again the same goblin addresses him thus :—

"Fairy king, attend and mark,
I do hear the morning lark.
*Obe.* Then, my queen, in silence sad,
Trip we after the night's shade—
We the globe can compass soon,
Swifter than the wand'ring moon."

In another place Puck says—

"My fairy lord this must be done in haste ;
For night's swift dragons cut the clouds full fast,
And yonder shines Aurora's harbinger,
At whose approach ghosts, wandering here and there,
Troop home to churchyards," etc.

To which Oberon replies—

"But we are spirits of another sort :
I with the morning's love have oft made sport ;
And, like a forester, the groves may tread,
Even till the eastern gate, all fiery-red,
Opening on Neptune with fair blessed beams,
Turns into yellow gold his salt-green streams."

Compare, likewise, what Robin himself says on this subject in the old song of his exploits.

They never ate—

> "But that it eats our victuals, I should think,
> Here were a fairy,"

says Belarius at the first sight of Imogen, as Fidele.

They were humanely attentive to the youthful dead. Thus Guiderius at the funeral of the above lady—

> "With female fairies will his tomb be haunted."

Or, as in the pathetic dirge of Collins on the same occasion :—

> "No wither'd witch shall here be seen,
> No goblins lead their nightly crew;
> The female fays shall haunt the green,
> And dress the grave with pearly dew."

This amiable quality is, likewise, thus beautifully alluded to by the same poet :—

> "By fairy hands their knell is rung,
> By forms unseen their dirge is sung."

Their employment is thus charmingly represented by Shakespeare, in the address of Prospero :—

> "Ye elves of hills, brooks, standing lakes, and groves;
> And ye, that on the sands, with printless foot
> Do chase the ebbing Neptune, and do fly him
> When he comes back; you demi-puppets, that

By moon-shine do the green-sour ringlets make,
Whereof the ewe not bites; and you, whose pastime
Is to make midnight mushrooms; that rejoice
To hear the solemn curfew."

In *The Midsummer Night's Dream*, the queen, Titania, being desirous to take a nap, says to her female attendants—

"Come, now a roundel, and a fairy song;
Then, for the third part of a minute hence;
Some to kill cankers in the musk-rosebuds;
Some, war with rear-mice for their leathern wings,
To make my small elves coats; and some keep back
The clamorous owl that nightly hoots, and wonders
At our quaint spirits. Sing me now asleep;
Then to your offices, and let me rest."

Milton gives a most beautiful and accurate description of the little green-coats of his native soil, than which nothing can be more happily or justly expressed. He had certainly seen them, in this situation, with "the poet's eye":—

". . . Fairie elves,
Whose midnight revels, by a forest side
Or fountain, some belated peasant sees,
Or dreams he sees, while overhead the moon,
Sits arbitress, and neerer to the earth
Wheels her pale course, they, on thir mirth and dance
Intent, with jocond music charm his ear;
At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds."

The impression they made upon his imagination

in early life appears from his "Vacation Exercise," at the age of nineteen :—

"Good luck befriend thee, son; for, at thy birth
The faiery ladies daunc't upon the hearth;
The drowsie nurse hath sworn she did them spie
Come tripping to the room where thou didst lie,
And, sweetly singing round about thy bed,
Strew all their blessings on thy sleeping head."

L'Abbé Bourdelon, in his *Ridiculous Extravagances of M. Ouflé*, describes "The fairies of which," he says, "grandmothers and nurses tell so many tales to children. These fairies," adds he, "I mean, who are affirmed to be blind at home, and very clear-sighted abroad; who dance in the moonshine when they have nothing else to do; who steal shepherds and children, to carry them up to their caves," etc. —(English translation, p. 190.)

The fairies have already called themselves *spirits, ghosts*, or *shadows*, and consequently they never died, a position, at the same time, of which there is every kind of proof that a fact can require. The reviser of Johnson and Steevens's edition of *Shakespeare*, in 1785, makes a ridiculous reference to the allegories of Spenser, and a palpably false one to Tickell's *Kensington Gardens*, which he affirms "will show that the opinion of fairies dying prevailed in the last century," whereas, in fact, it is found, on the slightest glance into the poem, to maintain the direct reverse :—

"Meanwhile sad Kenna, loath to quit the grove,
Hung o'er the body of her breathless love,
Try'd every art (vain arts!) to change his doom,
And vow'd (vain vows!) to join him in the tomb.
What would she do? The Fates alike deny
The dead to live, or fairy forms to die."

The fact is so positively proved, that no editor or commentator of Shakespeare, present or future, will ever have the folly or impudence to assert "that in Shakespeare's time the notion of fairies dying was generally known."

Ariosto informs us (in Harington's translation, Bk. x. s. 47) that

". . . (Either auncient folke believ'd a lie,
Or this is true) a fayrie cannot die."

And again (Bk. xliii. s. 92),

"I am a fayrie, and, to make you know,
To be a fayrie what it doth import:
We cannot dye, how old so ear we grow.
Of paines and harmes of ev'rie other sort
We tast, onelie no death we nature ow."

Beaumont and Fletcher, in *The Faithful Shepherdess*, describe—

"A virtuous well, about whose flow'ry banks
The nimble-footed fairies dance their rounds,
By the pale moonshine, dipping oftentimes
Their stolen children, so to make 'em free
From dying flesh, and dull mortality."

Puck, *alias* Robin Good-fellow, is the most active and extraordinary fellow of a fairy that we any-

where meet with, and it is believed we find him nowhere but in our own country, and, peradventure also, only in the South. Spenser, it would seem, is the first that alludes to his name of Puck:—

> "Ne let the *Pouke*, nor other evill spright,
> Ne let Hob-goblins, names whose sense we see not,
> Fray us with things that be not."

"In our childhood," says Reginald Scot, "our mothers' maids have so terrified us with an oughe divell having hornes on his head, fier in his mouth, and a taile, eies like a bason, fanges like a dog, clawes like a beare, a skin like a niger, and a voice roaring like a lion, whereby we start and are afraid when we heare one crie Bough! and they have so fraied us with bull-beggers, spirits, witches, urchens, elves, hags, fairies, satyrs, pans, sylens, Kit with the cansticke, tritons, centaurs, dwarfes, giants, imps, calcars, conjurors, nymphes, changling, Incubus, Robin Goodfellow, the spoorne, the mare, the man in the oke, the hell wain, the fier drake, the puckle, Tom Thombe, Hob gobblin, Tom Tumbler, boneles, and such other bugs, that we are afraid of our owne shadowes."—(*Discoverie of Witchcraft*, London, 1584, 4to, p. 153.) "And know you this by the waie," he says, "that heretofore Robin Goodfellow and Hob goblin were as terrible, and also as credible, to the people as hags and witches be now. . . . And in truth, they that mainteine walking spirits

have no reason to denie Robin Goodfellow, upon whom there hath gone as manie and as credible tales as upon witches, saving that it hath not pleased the translators of the Bible to call spirits by the name of Robin Goodfellow."—(P. 131.)

"Your grandams' maides," says he, "were woont to set a boll of milke before Incubus and his cousine Robin Goodfellow for grinding of malt or mustard, and sweeping the house at midnight; and you have also heard that he would chafe exceedingly if the maid or good-wife of the house, having compassion of his naked state, laid anie clothes for him, besides his messe of white bread and milke, which was his standing fee. For in that case he saith, What have we here?

> "Hemton, hamton,
> Here will I never more tread nor stampen."
> (*Discoverie of Witchcraft*, p. 85.)

Robin is thus characterised in *The Midsummer Night's Dream* by a female fairy:—

> "Either I mistake your shape and making quite,
> Or else you are that shrewd and knavish sprite
> Call'd Robin Goodfellow: are you not he
> That fright the maidens of the villagery;
> Skim milk; and sometimes labour in the quern,
> And bootless make the breathless housewife churn;
> And sometime make the drink to bear no barm;
> Mislead night-wanderers, laughing at their harm?
> Those that Hobgoblin call you, and sweet Puck,
> You do their work, and they shall have good luck."

To these questions Robin thus replies:—

"Thou speak'st aright;
I am that merry wanderer of the night.
I jest to Oberon, and make him smile,
When I a fat and bean-fed horse beguile,
Neighing in likeness of a filly foal:
And sometimes lurk I in a gossip's bowl,
In very likeness of a roasted crab;
And, when she drinks, against her lips I bob,
And on her wither'd dewlap pour the ale.
The wisest aunt, telling the saddest tale,
Sometime for three-foot stool mistaketh me;
Then slip I from her bum, down topples she,
And 'tailor,' cries, and falls into a cough;
And then the whole quire hold their hips, and laugh;
And waxen in their mirth, and neeze, and swear,
A merrier hour was never wasted there."

His usual exclamation in this play is Ho, ho, ho!

"Ho, ho, ho! Coward, why com'st thou not?"

So in *Grim, the Collier of Croydon*:—

"Ho, ho, ho! my masters! No good fellowship!
Is Robin Goodfellow a bugbear grown,
That he is not worthy to be bid sit down?"

In the song printed by Peck, he concludes every stanza with Ho, ho, ho!

"If that the bowle of curds and creame were not duly set out for Robin Goodfellow, the frier, and Sisse the dairymaid, why, then, either the pottage was so burnt to next day in the pot, or the cheeses would not curdle, or the butter would not come, or

the ale in the fat never would have good head. But if a Peter-penny, or an housle-egge were behind, or a patch of tythe unpaid, then 'ware of bull-beggars, spirits," etc.

This frolicsome spirit thus describes himself in Jonson's masque of *Love Restored*: "Robin Goodfellow, he that sweeps the hearth and the house clean, riddles for the country maids, and does all their other drudgery, while they are at hot-cockles; one that has conversed with your court spirits ere now." Having recounted several ineffectual attempts he had made to gain admittance, he adds: "In this despair, when all invention and translation too failed me, I e'en went back and stuck to this shape you see me in of mine own, with my broom and my canles, and came on confidently." The mention of his broom reminds us of a passage in another play, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, where he tells the audience—

> "I am sent with broom before,
> To sweep the dust behind the door."

He is likewise one of the *dramatis personæ* in the old play of *Wily Beguiled*, in which he says—

"Tush! fear not the dodge. I'll rather put on my flashing red nose, and my flaming face, and come wrap'd in a calf-skin, and cry *Bo, bo*! I'll pay the scholar, I warrant thee."—(Harsnet's *Declaration*, London, 1604, 4to.) His character, however, in

this piece, is so diabolical, and so different from anything one could expect in Robin Good-fellow, that it is unworthy of further quotation.

He appears, likewise, in another, entitled *Grim, the Collier of Croydon,* in which he enters "in a suit of leather close to his body; his face and hands coloured russet colour, with a flail."

He is here, too, in most respects, the same strange and diabolical personage that he is represented in *Wily Beguiled,* only there is a single passage which reminds us of his old habits:—

"When as I list in this transform'd disguise
I 'll fright the country people as I pass;
And sometimes turn me to some other form,
And so delude them with fantastic shows,
But woe betide the silly dairymaids,
For I shall fleet their cream-bowls night by night."

In another scene he enters while some of the other characters are at a bowl of cream, upon which he says—

"I love a mess of cream as well as they;
I think it were best I stept in and made one:
Ho, ho, ho! my masters! No good fellowship!
Is Robin Goodfellow a bugbear grown
That he is not worthy to be bid sit down?"

There is, indeed, something characteristic in this passage, but all the rest is totally foreign.

Doctor Percy, Bishop of Dromore, has reprinted in his *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* a very curious

and excellent old ballad originally published by Peck, who attributes it, but with no similitude, to Ben Jonson, in which Robin Good-fellow relates his exploits with singular humour. To one of these copies, he says, "were prefixed two wooden cuts, which seem to represent the dresses in which this whimsical character was formerly exhibited upon the stage." In this conjecture, however, the learned and ingenious editor was most egregiously mistaken, these cuts being manifestly printed from the identical blocks made use of by Bulwer in his "Artificial Changeling," printed in 1615, the first being intended for one of the black and white gallants of Seale-bay adorned with the moon, stars, etc., the other a hairy savage.

Burton, speaking of fairies, says that "a bigger kind there is of them, called with Hobgoblins, and Robin Goodfellowes, that would in those superstitious times, grinde corne for a messe of milke, cut wood, or do any kind of drudgery worke." Afterward, of the dæmons that mislead men in the night, he says, "We commonly call them Pucks."—(*Anatomy of Melancholie.*)

Cartwright, in *The Ordinary*, introduces *Moth*, repeating this curious charm :—

> "Saint Frances and Saint Benedight
> Blesse this house from wicked wight,
> From the nightmare, and the goblin
> That is hight Goodfellow Robin ;

Keep it from all evil spirits,
Fairies, weezels, rats, and ferrets ;
From curfew time
To the next prime."
(Act III. Sc. 1.)

This Puck, or Robin Good-fellow, seems, likewise, to be the illusory candle-holder, so fatal to travellers, and who is more usually called *Jack-a-lantern*, or *Will-with-a-wisp*; and, as it would seem from a passage elsewhere cited from Scot, *Kit with the canstick*. Thus a fairy, in a passage of Shakespeare already quoted, asks Robin—

". . . Are you not he
That frights the maidens of the villagery,
Misleads night-wanderers laughing at their harm ? "

Milton alludes to this deceptive gleam in the following lines—

". . . A wandering fire,
Compact of unctuous vapour, which the night
Condenses, and the cold environs round,
Kindled through agitation to a flame,
Which oft, they say, some evil spirit attends,
Hovering and blazing with delusive light,
Misleads th' amazed night-wanderer from his way
To bogs and mires, and oft through pond and pool."
(*Paradise Lost*, Bk. 9).

He elsewhere calls him "the frier's lantern."—(*L'Allegro*).

This facetious spirit only misleads the benighted traveller (generally an honest farmer, in his way

from the market, in a state of intoxication) for the joke's sake, as one very seldom, if ever, hears any of his deluded followers (who take it to be the torch of Hero in some hospitable mansion, affording "provision for man and horse") perishing in these ponds or pools, through which they dance or plunge after him so merrily.

"There go as manie tales," says Reginald Scot, "upon Hudgin, in some parts of Germanie, as there did in England of Robin Good-fellow. . . . Frier Rush was for all the world such another fellow as this Hudgin, and brought up even in the same schoole—to wit, in a kitchen, inasmuch as the selfe-same tale is written of the one as of the other, concerning the skullian, who is said to have beene slaine, etc., for the reading whereof I referre you to frier Rush his storie, or else to John Wierus, *De Præstigiis Dæmonum.*"

In the old play of *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, printed in 1575, Hodge, describing a "great black devil" which had been raised by Diccon, the bedlam, and being asked by Gammer—

> "But, Hodge, had he no horns to push?"

replies—

> "As long as your two arms. Saw ye never Fryer Rushe,
> Painted on a cloth, with a side-long cowe's tayle,
> And crooked cloven feet, and many a hoked nayle?
> For al the world (if I schuld judg) chould reckon him his brother;
> Loke even what face frier Rush had, the devil had such another."

The fairies frequented many parts of the bishopric of Durham. There is a hillock, or tumulus, near Bishopton, and a large hill near Billingham, both which used, in former time, to be "haunted by fairies." Even Ferry-hill, a well-known stage between Darlington and Durham, is evidently a corruption of Fairy-hill. When seen, by accident or favour, they are described as of the smallest size, and uniformly habited in green. They could, however, occasionally assume a different size and appearance; as a woman, who had been admitted into their society, challenged one of the guests, whom she espied in the market, selling fairy-butter. This freedom was deeply resented, and cost her the eye she first saw him with. Mr. Brand mentions his having met with a man, who said he had seen one who had seen the fairies. Truth, he adds, is to be come at in most cases. None, he believes, ever came nearer to it in this than he has done. However that may be, the present editor cannot pretend to have been more fortunate. His informant related that an acquaintance in Westmoreland, having a great desire, and praying earnestly, to see a fairy, was told by a friend, if not a fairy in disguise, that on the side of such a hill, at such a time of day, he should have a sight of one, and accordingly, at the time and place appointed, "the hobgoblin," in his own words, "stood before him in the likeness of a green-coat lad," but in the same instant, the

spectator's eye glancing, vanished into the hill. This, he said, the man told him.

"The streets of Newcastle," says Mr. Brand, "were formerly (so vulgar tradition has it) haunted by a nightly *guest*, which appeared in the shape of a mastiff dog, etc., and terrified such as were afraid of shadows. I have heard," he adds, "when a boy, many stories concerning it."

The no less famous *barguest* of Durham, and the Picktree-*brag*, have been already alluded to. The former, beside its many other pranks, would sometimes, at the dead of night, in passing through the different streets, set up the most horrid and continuous shrieks to scare the poor girls who might happen to be out of bed. The compiler of the present sheets remembers, when very young, to have heard a respectable old woman, then a midwife at Stockton, relate that when, in her youthful days, she was a servant at Durham, being up late one Saturday night cleaning the irons in the kitchen, she heard these *skrikes*, first at a great and then at a less distance, till at length the loudest and most horrible that can be conceived, just at the kitchen window, sent her upstairs, she did not know how, where she fell into the arms of a fellow-servant, who could scarcely prevent her fainting away.

"Pioneers or diggers for metal," according to Lavater, "do affirme that in many mines there

appeare straunge shapes and spirites, who are apparelled like unto other laborers in the pit. These wander up and down in caves and underminings, and seeme to bestuire themselves in all kinde of labour, as to digge after the veine, to carrie togither oare, to put it in baskets, and to turne the winding-whele to draw it up, when, in very deede, they do nothing lesse. They very seldome hurte the labourers (as they say) except they provoke them by laughing and rayling at them, for then they threw gravel stones at them, or hurt them by some other means. These are especially haunting in pittes where mettall moste aboundeth."—(*Of ghostes*, etc., London, 1572, 4to, p. 73.)

This is our great Milton's

"Swart faëry of the mine."

"Simple foolish men imagine, I know not howe, that there be certayne elves or fairies of the earth, and tell many straunge and marvellous tales of them, which they have heard of their grandmothers and mothers, howe they have appeared unto those of the house, have done service, have rocked the cradell, and (which is a signe of good luck) do continually tarry in the house."—(*Of ghostes*, etc., p. 49.)

Mallet, though without citing any authority, says, "after all, the notion is not everywhere exploded that there are in the bowels of the earth, fairies, or a kind of dwarfish and tiny beings of

human shape, and remarkable for their riches, their activity, and malevolence. In many countries of the north, the people are still firmly persuaded of their existence. In Ireland, at this day, the good folk show the very rocks and hills in which they maintain that there are swarms of these small subterraneous men, of the most tiny size, but the most delicate figures."—(*Northern Antiquities*, etc., ii. 47.)

There is not a more generally received opinion throughout the principality of Wales than that of the existence of fairies. Amongst the commonalty it is, indeed, universal, and by no means unfrequently credited by the second ranks.

Fairies are said, at a distant period, "to have frequented Bussers-hill in St. Mary's island, but their nightly pranks, aërial gambols, and cockle-shell abodes, are now quite unknown."—(Heath's *Account of the Islands of Scilly*, p. 129.)

"Evil spirits, called fairies, are frequently seen in several of the isles [of Orkney], dancing and making merry, and sometimes seen in armour."—(Brand's *Description of Orkney*, Edin., 1703, p. 61.)

## NELLY, THE KNOCKER.

A FARM-STEADING situated near the borders of Northumberland, a few miles from Haltwhistle, was once occupied by a family of the name of W—— K——n. In front of the dwelling-house, and at about sixty yards' distance, lay a stone of vast size, as ancient, for so tradition amplifies the date, as the flood. On this stone, at the dead hour of the night, might be discerned a female figure, wrapped in a grey cloak, with one of those low-crowned black bonnets, so familiar to our grandmothers, upon her head. She was incessantly knock, knock, knocking, in a fruitless endeavour to split the impenetrable rock. Duly as night came round, she occupied her lonely station, in the same low crouching attitude, and pursued the dreary obligations of her destiny, till the grey streaks of the dawn gave admonition to depart. From this, the only perceptible action in which she engaged, she obtained the name of Nelly, the Knocker. So perfectly had the inmates of the farmhouse in the lapse of time, which will reconcile sights and events the most disagreeable and alarming, become accustomed to

Nelly's undeviating nightly din, that the work went forward unimpeded and undisturbed by any apprehension accruing from her shadowy presence. Did the servant-man make his punctual resort to the neighbouring cottages, he took the liberty of scrutinising Nelly's antiquated garb that varied not with the vicissitudes of seasons, or he pried sympathetically into the progress of her monotonous occupation, and though her pale, ghastly, contracted features gave a momentary pang of terror, it was rapidly effaced in the vortex of good fellowship into which he was speedily drawn. Did the loon venture an appointment with his mistress at the rustic style of the stack-garth, Nelly's unwearied hammer, instead of proving a barrier, only served, by imparting a grateful sense of mutual danger, to render more intense the raptures of the hour of meeting. So apathetic were the feelings cherished towards her, and so little jealousy existed of her power to injure, that the relater of these circumstances states that on several occasions she has passed Nelly at her laborious toil, without evincing the slightest perturbation, beyond a hurried step, as she stole a glance at the inexplicable and mysterious form.

An event, in the course of years, disclosed the secrets that marvellous stone shrouded, and drove poor Nelly for ever from the scene so inscrutably linked with her fate.

Two of the sons of the farmer were rapidly approaching maturity, when one of them, more reflecting

and shrewd than his compeers, suggested the idea of relieving Nelly from her toilsome avocation, and of taking possession of the alluring legacy to which she was evidently and urgently summoning. He proposed, conjointly with his father and brother, to blast the stone, as the most expeditious mode of gaining access to her arcana, and, this in the open daylight, in order that any tutelary protection she might be disposed to extend to her favourite haunt might, as she was a thing of darkness and the night, be effectually countervailed. Nor were their hopes frustrated, for, upon clearing away the earth and fragments that resulted from the explosion, there was revealed to their elated and admiring gaze, a precious booty of closely packed urns copiously enriched with gold. Anxious that no intimation of their good fortune should transpire, they had taken the precaution to despatch the female servant on a needless errand, and ere her return the whole treasure was efficiently and completely secured. So completely did they succeed in keeping their own counsel, and so successfully did their reputation keep pace with the cautious production of their undivulged treasures, that for many years afterwards they were never suspected of gaining any advantage from poor Nelly's "knocking"; their improved appearance, and the somewhat imposing figure they made in their little district, being solely attributed to their superior judgment, and to the good management of their lucky farm.

## THE THREE FOOLS.

THERE was once a good-looking girl, the daughter of well-off country folk, who was loved by an honest young fellow named John. He courted her for a long time, and at last got her and her parents to consent to his marrying her, which was to come off in a few weeks' time.

One day as the girl's father was working in his garden he sat down to rest himself by the well, and, looking in, and seeing how deep it was, he fell a-thinking.

"If Jane had a child," said he to himself, "who knows but that one day it might play about here and fall in and be killed?"

The thought of such a thing filled him with sorrow, and he sat crying into the well for some time until his wife came to him.

"What is the matter?" asked she. "What are you crying for?"

Then the man told her his thoughts—

"If Jane marries and has a child," said he, "who knows but it might play about here and some day fall into the well and be killed?"

"Alack!" cried the woman, "I never thought of that before. It is, indeed, possible."

So she sat down and wept with her husband.

As neither of them came to the house the daughter shortly came to look for them, and when she found them sitting crying into the well—

"What is the matter?" asked she. "Why do you weep?"

So her father told her of the thought that had struck him.

"Yes," said she, "it might happen."

So she too sat down with her father and mother, and wept into the well.

They had sat there a good while when John comes to them.

"What has made you so sad?" asked he.

So the father told him what had occurred, and said that he should be afraid to let him have his daughter seeing her child might fall into the well.

"You are three fools," said the young man, when he had heard him to an end, and leaving them, he thought over whether he should try to get Jane for his wife or not. At length he decided that he would marry her if he could find three people more foolish than her and her father and mother. He put on his boots and went out.

"I will walk till I wear these boots out," said he, "and if I find three more foolish people before I am barefoot, I will marry her."

So he went on, and walked very far till he came to a barn, at the door of which stood a man with a shovel in his hands. He seemed to be working very hard, shovelling the air in at the door.

"What are you doing?" asked John.

"I am shovelling in the sunbeams," replied the man, "to ripen the corn."

"Why don't you have the corn out in the sun for it to ripen it?" asked John.

"Good," said the man. "Why, I never thought of that! Good luck to you, for you have saved me many a weary day's work."

"That's fool number one," said John, and went on.

He travelled a long way, until one day he came to a cottage, against the wall of it was placed a ladder, and a man was trying to pull a cow up it by means of a rope, one end of which was round the cow's neck.

"What are you about?" asked John.

"Why," replied the man, "I want the cow up on the roof to eat off that fine tuft of grass you see growing there."

"Why don't you cut the grass and give it to the cow?" asked John.

"Why, now, I never thought of that!" answered the man. "So I will, of course, and many thanks, for many a good cow have I killed in trying to get it up there."

"That's fool number two," said John to himself.

He walked on a long way, thinking there were more fools in the world than he had thought, and wondering what would be the next one he should meet. He had to wait a long time, however, and to walk very far, and his boots were almost worn out before he found another.

One day, however, he came to a field, in the middle of which he saw a pair of trousers standing up, being held up by sticks. A man was running about them and jumping over and over them.

"Hullo!" cried John. "What are you about?"

"Why," said the man, "what need is there to ask? Don't you see I want to get the trousers on?" so saying he took two or three more runs and jumps, but always jumped either to this side or that of the trousers.

"Why don't you take the trousers and draw them on?" asked John.

"Good," said the man. "Why, I never thought of it! Many thanks. I only wish you had come before, for I have lost a great deal of time in trying to jump into them."

"That," said John, "is fool number three."

So, as his boots were not yet quite worn out, he returned to his home and went again to ask Jane of her father and mother. At last they gave her to him, and they lived very happily together, for John had a rail put round the well and the child did *not* fall into it.

# SOME MERRY TALES OF THE WISE MEN OF GOTHAM.

From a chap-book printed at Hull in the beginning of the present century.]

## Tale First.

There were two men of Gotham, and one of them was going to the market at Nottingham to buy sheep, and the other was coming from the market, and both met together on Nottingham bridge.

"Well met," said the one to the other.

"Whither are you a-going?" said he that came from Nottingham.

"Marry," said he that was going thither, "I am going to the market to buy sheep."

"Buy sheep," said the other; "and which way will you bring them home?"

"Marry," said the other, "I will bring them over this bridge."

"By Robin Hood," said he that came from Nottingham, "but thou shalt not."

"By maid Marjoram," said he that was going thither, "but I will."

shalt not," said the one.

," said the other.

here," said the one, and "Tut there," said r. Then they beat their staves against the one against the other, as if there had been red sheep betwixt them.

old them there," said one.

eware of the leaping over the bridge of my ," said the other.

care not."

They shall all come this way," said the one.

But they shall not," said the other.

As they were in contention, another wise man at belonged to Gotham came from the market ith a sack of meal upon his horse, and seeing and earing his neighbours at strife about sheep, and one betwixt them, said he—

"Ah, fools! will you never learn wit? Then help me," said he that had the meal, "and lay this sack upon my shoulder."

They did so, and he went to one side of the bridge, and unloosed the mouth of the sack, and shook out the meal into the river. Then said he—

"How much meal is there in the sack, neighbours?"

"Marry," answered they, "none."

"Now, by my faith," replied this wise man, "even so much wit is there in your two heads, to strive concerning that thing which you have not."

Now, which was the wisest of all th
persons I leave you to judge.

## Tale Second.

On a time the men of Gotham fain wou
pinned in the cuckoo, whereby she should s
the year; and in the midst of the town they
hedge made round in compass, and they g
cuckoo, and put her into it, and said—

"Sing here, and you shall lack neither mea
drink all the year."

The cuckoo, when she perceived herself on
passed within the hedge, flew away.

"A vengeance on her," said the wise men, "
made not our hedge high enough."

## Tale Third.

There was a man of Gotham who went to the
market of Nottingham to sell cheese, and, as he was
going down the hill to Nottingham bridge, one of
his cheese fell out of his wallet, and ran down the
hill.

"What!" said the fellow, "can you run to the market alone? I will now send one after the other."

Then laying down the wallet, and taking out the cheese, he tumbled them down the hill, one after the other, and some ran into one bush and some into another, so at last he said—

"I do charge you to meet me in the market-place."

And when the man came into the market to meet the cheese, he stayed until the market was almost done, then went and inquired of his neighbours and other men if they did see his cheese come to market.

"Why, who should bring them?" said one of his neighbours.

"Marry, themselves!" said the fellow. "They knew the way well enough," said he. "A vengeance on them, for I was afraid, to see my cheese run so fast, that they would run beyond the market. I am persuaded that they are by this time almost at York."

So he immediately takes a horse, and rides after them to York, but was very much disappointed.

But to this day no man has ever heard of the cheese.

## Tale Fourth.

When that Good Friday was come the men of Gotham did cast their heads together what to do with their white herrings, red herrings, their sprats, and salt fish. Then one counselled with the other, and agreed that all such fish should be cast into the pond or pool, which was in the middle of the town, that the number of them might increase against the next year. Therefore every one that had got any

fish left did cast them into the pond. Then one said—

"I have as yet gotten left so many red herrings."

"Well," said the other, "and I have left so many whitings."

Another immediately cried out—

"I have as yet gotten so many sprats left."

"And," said the last, "I have got so many salt fishes. Let them all go together into the great pond without any distinction, and we may be sure to fare like lords the next year."

At the beginning of the next Lent they immediately went about drawing the pond, imagining they should have the fish, but were much surprised to find nothing but a great eel.

"Ah!" said they, "a mischief on this eel, for he hath eaten up our fish."

"What must we do with him?" said one to the other.

"Kill him!" said one to the other.

"Chop him into pieces," said another.

"Nay, not so," said the other, "but let us drown him."

"Be it accordingly so," replied they all.

So they immediately went to another pond, and did cast the eel into the water.

"Lie there," said these wise men, "and shift for thyself, since you can expect no help from us."

So they left the eel to be drowned.

## TALE FIFTH.

ON a certain time there were twelve men of Gotham that went a-fishing; and some did wade in the water, and some did stand upon dry land. And when they went homeward, one said to the other—

"We have ventured wonderful hard this day in wading, I pray God that none of us may have come from home to be drowned."

"Nay, marry," said one to the other, "let us see that, for there did twelve of us come out."

Then they told themselves, and every man told eleven, and the twelfth man did never tell himself.

"Alas!" said the one to the other, "there is some one of us drowned."

They went back to the brook where they had been fishing, and did make a great lamentation. A courtier did come riding by, and did ask what it was they sought for, and why they were so sorrowful.

"Oh!" said they, "this day we went to fish in the brook, and here did come out twelve of us, and one of us is drowned."

"Why," said the courtier, "tell how many there be of you," and the one said eleven, and he did not tell himself.

"Well," said the courtier, "what will you give me, and I will find out twelve men?"

"Sir," said they, "all the money we have got."

"Give me the money," said the courtier; and began with the first, and gave a recommendibus over the shoulders, which made him groan, saying, "Here is one;" and so he served them all, that they groaned at the matter. When he came to the last, he paid him well, saying—

"Here is the twelfth man."

"God's blessing on thy heart for finding out our dear brother."

## Tale Sixth.

A man's wife of Gotham had a child, and the father bid the gossips, which were children of eight or ten years of age. The eldest child's name, who was to be godfather, was called Gilbert, the second child's name was Humphrey, and the godmother's name was Christabel. The friends of all of them did admonish them, saying, that divers of times they must say after the priest. When they were all come to the church-door, the priest said—

"Be you all agreed of the name?"

"Be you all," said Gilbert, "agreed of the name?"

The priest then said—

"Wherefore do you come hither?"

Gilbert said, "Wherefore do you come hither?" Humphrey said, "Wherefore do you come hither?"

And Christabel said, "Wherefore do you come hither?"

The priest being amazed, he could not tell what to say, but whistled and said "Whew!"

Gilbert whistled and said "Whew!" Humphrey whistled and said "Whew!" and so did Christabel. The priest being angry, said—

"Go home, fools, go home!"

Then said Gilbert and Humphrey and Christabel the same.

The priest then himself provided for god-fathers and god-mothers.

Here a man may see that children can do nothing without good instruction, and that they are not wise who regard them.

## THE TULIP FAIRIES.

NEAR a pixy field in the neighbourhood of Dartmoor, there lived, on a time, an old woman who possessed a cottage and a very pretty garden, wherein she cultivated a most beautiful bed of tulips. The pixies, it is traditionally averred, so delighted in this spot that they would carry their elfin babes thither, and sing them to rest. Often, at the dead hour of the night, a sweet lullaby was heard, and strains of the most melodious music would float in the air, that seemed to owe their origin to no other musicians than the beautiful tulips themselves, and whilst these delicate flowers waved their heads to the evening breeze, it sometimes seemed as if they were marking time to their own singing. As soon as the elfin babes were lulled asleep by such melodies, the pixies would return to the neighbouring field, and there commence dancing, making those rings on the green which showed, even to mortal eyes, what sort of gambols had occupied them during the night season.

At the first dawn of light the watchful pixies once more sought the tulips, and, though still

invisible they could be heard kissing and caressing their babies. The tulips, thus favoured by a race of genii, retained their beauty much longer than any other flowers in the garden, whilst, though contrary to their nature, as the pixies breathed over them, they became as fragrant as roses, and so delighted at all was the old woman who kept the garden that she never suffered a single tulip to be plucked from its stem.

At length, however, she died, and the heir who succeeded her destroyed the enchanted flowers, and converted the spot into a parsley-bed, a circumstance which so disappointed and offended the pixies, that they caused all the parsley to wither away, and, indeed, for many years nothing would grow in the beds of the whole garden. These sprites, however, though eager in resenting an injury, were, like most warm spirits, equally capable of returning a benefit, and if they destroyed the product of the good old woman's garden when it had fallen into unworthy hands, they tended the bed that wrapped her clay with affectionate solicitude. They were heard lamenting and singing sweet dirges around her grave; nor did they neglect to pay this mournful tribute to her memory every night before the moon was at the full, for then their high solemnity of dancing, singing, and rejoicing took place to hail the queen of the night on completing her circle in the heavens. No human hand ever tended the grave

of the poor old woman who had nurtured the tulip bed for the delight of these elfin creatures; but no rank weed was ever seen to grow upon it. The sod was ever green, and the prettiest flowers would spring up without sowing or planting, and so they continued to do until it was supposed the mortal body was reduced to its original dust.

# THE HISTORY OF JACK AND THE GIANTS.

## I.

[From a Chap-book printed and sold in Aldermary Churchyard, London. Probable date, 1780.]

IN the reign of King Arthur, near to the Land's End of England, in the County of Cornwall, lived a wealthy farmer, who had a son named Jack. He was brisk and of a ready wit, so that whatever he could not perform by force and strength he completed by wit and policy. Never was any person heard of that could worst him. Nay, the very learned many times he has baffled by his cunning and sharp inventions.

In those days the Mount of Cornwall was kept by a large and monstrous giant of eighteen feet high, and about three yards in circumference, of a fierce and grim countenance, the terror of the neighbouring towns and villages.

His habitation was in a cave in the midst of the Mount. Never would he suffer any living creature to keep near him. His feeding was on other men's

cattle, which often became his prey, for whenever he wanted food, he would wade over to the mainland, where he would well furnish himself with whatever he could find, for the people at his approach would all forsake their habitations. Then would he seize upon their cows and oxen, of which he would think nothing to carry over upon his back half a dozen at one time; and as for their sheep and boys, he would tie them round his waist like a bunch of candles. This he practised for many years, so that a great part of the county of Cornwall was very much impoverished by him.

Jack having undertaken to destroy this voracious monster, he furnished himself with a horn, a shovel, and a pickaxe, and over to the mount he went in the beginning of a dark winter's evening, where he fell to work, and before morning had dug a pit twenty-two feet deep, and in width nearly the same, and covering it over with sticks and straw, and then strewing a little mould over it, it appeared like plain ground. Then, putting his horn to his mouth, he blew tan-tivy, tan-tivy, which noise awoke the giant, who came roaring towards Jack, crying out—

"You incorrigible villain, you shall pay dearly for disturbing me, for I will broil you for my breakfast."

These words were no sooner spoke, but he tumbled headlong into the pit, and the heavy fall made the foundation of the Mount to shake.

"O Mr. Giant, where are you now? Oh, faith, you are gotten into Lob's Pound, where I will surely plague you for your threatening words. What do you think now of broiling me for your breakfast? Will no other diet serve you but poor Jack?"

Having thus spoken and made merry with him a while, he struck him such a blow on the crown with his pole-axe that he tumbled down, and with a groan expired. This done, Jack threw the dirt in upon him and so buried him. Then, searching the cave, he found much treasure.

Now when the magistrates who employed Jack heard that the job was over, they sent for him, declaring that he should be henceforth called Jack the Giant Killer, and in honour thereof presented him with a sword and an embroidered belt, upon which these words were written in letters of gold—

"Here 's the valiant Cornish man,
Who slew the giant, Cormoran."

The news of Jack's victory was soon spread over the western parts, so that another giant, called Old Blunderbore, hearing of it, vowed to be revenged on Jack, if it ever was his fortune to light on him. The giant kept an enchanted castle situated in the midst of a lonesome wood.

About four months after as Jack was walking by the borders of this wood, on his journey towards Wales, he grew weary, and therefore sat

himself down by the side of a pleasant fountain, when a deep sleep suddenly seized him. At this time the giant, coming there for water, found him, and by the lines upon his belt immediately knew him to be Jack, who had killed his brother giant. So, without any words, he took him upon his shoulder to carry him to his enchanted castle. As he passed through a thicket, the jostling of the boughs awoke Jack, who, finding himself in the clutches of the giant was very much surprised, though it was but the beginning of his terrors, for, entering the walls of the castle, he found the floor strewn and the walls covered with the skulls and bones of dead men, when the giant told him his bones should enlarge the number of what he saw. He also told him that the next day he would eat him with pepper and vinegar, and he did not question but that he would find him a curious breakfast. This said, he locks up poor Jack in an upper room, leaving him there while he went out to fetch another giant who lived in the same wood, that he also might partake of the pleasure they should have in the destruction of honest Jack. While he was gone dreadful shrieks and cries affrighted Jack, especially a voice which continually cried—

"Do what you can to get away,
Or you 'll become the giant's prey ;
He 's gone to fetch his brother who
Will likewise kill and torture you."

This dreadful noise so affrighted poor Jack, that he was ready to run distracted. Then, going to a window he opened the casement, and beheld afar off the two giants coming.

"So now," quoth Jack to himself, "my death or deliverance is at hand."

There were two strong cords in the room by him, at the end of which he made a noose, and as the giants were unlocking the iron gates, he threw the ropes over the giants' heads, and then threw the other end across a beam, when he pulled with all his might till he had throttled them. Then, fastening the ropes to a beam, he returned to the window, where he beheld the two giants black in the face, and so sliding down the ropes, he came upon the heads of the helpless giants, who could not defend themselves, and, drawing his own sword, he slew them both, and so delivered himself from their intended cruelty. Then, taking the bunch of keys, he entered the castle, where, upon strict search, he found three ladies tied up by the hair of their heads, and almost starved to death.

"Sweet ladies," said Jack, "I have destroyed the monster and his brutish brother, by which means I have obtained your liberties."

This said, he presented them with the keys of the castle, and proceeded on his journey to Wales.

Jack having got but little money, thought it prudent to make the best of his way by travelling

hard, and at length, losing his road, he was benighted, and could not get a place of entertainment, till, coming to a valley between two hills, he found a large house in a lonesome place, and by reason of his present necessity he took courage to knock at the gate. To his amazement there came forth a monstrous giant, having two heads, yet he did not seem so fiery as the other two, for he was a Welsh giant, and all he did was by private and secret malice, under the false show of friendship. Jack, telling his condition, he bid him welcome, showing him into a room with a bed, where he might take his night's repose. Upon this Jack undressed himself, but as the giant was walking to another apartment Jack heard him mutter these words to himself—

"Tho' here you lodge with me this night,
You shall not see the morning light,
My club shall dash your brains out quite."

"Say you so?" says Jack. "Is this one of your Welsh tricks? I hope to be as cunning as you."

Then, getting out of bed, and feeling about the room in the dark, he found a thick billet of wood, and laid it in the bed in his stead, then he hid himself in a dark corner of the room. In the dead time of the night came the giant with his club, and he struck several blows on the bed where Jack had artfully laid the billet. Then the giant returned back to his own room, supposing he had broken all

his bones. Early in the morning Jack came to thank him for his lodging.

"Oh," said the giant, "how have you rested? Did you see anything in the night?"

"No," said Jack, "but a rat gave me three or four slaps with his tail."

Soon after the giant went to breakfast on a great bowl of hasty pudding, giving Jack but a small quantity. Jack, being loath to let him know he could not eat with him, got a leather bag, and, putting it artfully under his coat, put the pudding into it. Then he told the giant he would show him a trick, and taking up a knife he ripped open the bag and out fell the pudding. The giant thought he had cut open his stomach and taken the pudding out.

"Odds splutters," says he, "hur can do that hurself," and, taking the knife up, he cut himself so badly that he fell down and died.

Thus Jack outwitted the Welsh giant and proceeded on his journey.

King Arthur's only son desired his father to furnish him with a certain sum of money, that he might go and seek his fortune in the principality of Wales, where a beautiful lady lived, whom he had heard was possessed with seven evil spirits.

The king, his father, counselled him against it, yet he could not be persuaded, so the favour was granted, which was one horse loaded with money, and another to ride on. Thus he went forth with-

out any attendants, and after several days' travel he came to a large market-town in Wales, where he beheld a vast crowd of people gathered together. The king's son demanded the reason of it, and was told that they had arrested a corpse for many large sums of money, which the deceased owed before he died. The king's son replied—

"It is a pity that creditors should be so cruel. Go, bury the dead, and let the creditors come to my lodgings, and their debts shall be discharged."

Accordingly they came, and in such great numbers that before night he had almost left himself penniless. Now Jack the Giant Killer being there, and seeing the generosity of the king's son, desired to be his servant. It being agreed on, the next morning they set forward. As they were riding out of the town's end, an old woman cried out—

"He has owed me twopence seven years, pray, sir, pay me as well as the rest."

The king's son put his hand in his pocket and gave it her, it being the last money he had, then, turning to Jack, he said—

"Take no thought nor heed. Let me alone, and I warrant you we will never want."

Now Jack had a small spell in his pocket, the which served for a refreshment, after which they had but one penny left between them. They spent the forenoon in travel and familiar discourse, until the sun grew low, when the king's son said—

"Jack, since we have got no money where can we lodge to-night?"

Jack replied—

"Master, we will do well enough, for I have an uncle who lives within two miles of this place. He is a huge and monstrous giant, having three heads. He will beat five hundred men in armour, and make them fly before him."

"Alas!" said the king's son, "what shall we do there? He will eat us up at a mouthful—nay, we are scarce sufficient to fill one hollow tooth."

"It is no matter for that," says Jack. "I myself will go before and prepare the way for you. Tarry here, and wait my return."

He waited, and Jack rode full speed. Coming to the castle gate, he immediately began to knock with such force that all the neighbouring hills resounded. The giant, roaring with a voice like thunder, called—

"Who is there?"

"None, but your poor cousin Jack."

"And what news," said he, "with my cou Jack?"

He replied—

"Dear uncle, heavy news."

"God wot! Prithee! what heavy news can c to me? I am a giant with three heads, and b thou knowest, I fight five hundred men in and make them all fly like chaff before the

"Oh," said Jack, "but here is a king's

*English.*

with a thousand men in armour to kill you, and to destroy all you have."

"O my cousin Jack, this is heavy news indeed, but I have a large vault underground where I will run and hide myself, and you shall lock, bolt, and bar me in, and keep the keys till the king's son is gone."

Jack, having now secured the giant, returned and fetched his master, and both made merry with the best dainties the house afforded. In the morning Jack furnished his master with fresh supplies of gold and silver, and having set him three miles on the road out of the giant's smell, he returned and let his uncle out of the hole, who asked Jack what he should give him for his care of him, seeing his castle was demolished.

"Why," said Jack, "I desire nothing but your old rusty sword, the coat in the closet, and the cap and the shoes at your bed's head."

"Ay," said the giant, "thou shalt have them, I'll be sure keep you them, for my sake. They are things of excellent use. The coat will keep you invisible, the cap will furnish you with knowledge, the sword cuts asunder whatever you strike, and the shoes are of extraordinary swiftness. They may be serviceable to you, so take them with all my heart."

Jack took them, and immediately followed his master. Having overtaken him, they soon arrived at the giant's dwelling, who, finding the king's son to

be a suitor, prepared a banquet for him, which being ended, she wiped her mouth with a handkerchief, saying—"You must show me this to-morrow morning, or lose your head," and then she put it in her bosom.

The king's son went to bed right sorrowful, but Jack's cap of knowledge instructed him how to obtain the handkerchief. In the midst of the night the lady called upon her familiar to carry her to Lucifer. Jack whipped on his coat of darkness, with his shoes of swiftness, and was there before her, but could not be seen by reason of his coat, which rendered him perfectly invisible to Lucifer himself. When the lady came she gave him the handkerchief, from whom Jack took it, and brought it to his master, who, showing it the next morning to the lady, saved his life. This much surprised the lady, but he had yet a harder trial to undergo. The next night the lady salutes the king's son, telling him he must show her the next day the lips she kissed last or lose his head.

"So I will," replied he, "if you kiss none but mine."

"It is neither here nor there for that," says she. "If you do not, death is your portion."

At midnight she went again and chid Lucifer for letting the handkerchief go.

"But now," said she, "I shall be too hard for the king's son, for I will kiss thee, and he is to show me

the lips I kissed last, and he can never show me thy lips."

Jack, standing up with his sword of sharpness, cut off the evil spirit's head, and brought it under his invisible coat to his master, who laid it at the end of his bolster, and in the morning, when the lady came up, he pulled it out and showed her the lips which she kissed last. Thus, she having been answered twice, the enchantment broke, and the evil spirit left her, to their mutual joy and satisfaction. Then she appeared her former self, both beauteous and virtuous. They were married the next morning, and soon after returned with joy to the court of King Arthur, where Jack, for his good services, was made one of the knights of the Round Table.

## II.

[From a Chap-book, printed and sold at Newcastle, by J. WHITE, 1711.]

JACK, having been successful in all his undertakings, and resolved not to be idle for the future, but to perform what service he could for the honour of his king and country, humbly requested of the king, his royal master, to fit him with a horse and money, to travel in search of strange and new adventures. "For," said he, "there are many giants yet living in the remote parts of the kingdom, and in the

dominions of Wales, to the unspeakable damage of your majesty's liege subjects, wherefore, may it please your majesty to give me encouragement, and I doubt not but in a short time to cut them all off, root and branch, and so rid the realm of those cruel giants and devouring monsters in nature."

Now, when the king had heard these noble propositions, and had duly considered the mischievous practices of those bloodthirsty giants, he immediately granted what honest Jack requested. And on the first day of March, being thoroughly furnished with all necessaries for his progress, he took his leave, not only of King Arthur, but likewise of all the trusty and hardy knights belonging to the Round Table, who, after much salutation and friendly greeting, parted, the king and nobles to their courtly palaces, and Jack the Giant Killer to the eager pursuit of Fortune's favours, taking with him the cap of knowledge, sword of sharpness, shoes of swiftness, and likewise the invisible coat, the latter to perfect and complete the dangerous enterprises that lay before him.

He travelled over vast hills and wonderful mountains till, at the end of three days, he came to a large and spacious wood, through which he must needs pass, where, on a sudden, to his great amazement, he heard dreadful shrieks and cries. Casting his eyes around to observe what it might be, he beheld with wonder a giant rushing along with a

worthy knight and his fair lady, whom he held by the hair of their heads in his hands, with as much ease as if they had been but a pair of gloves, the sight of which melted honest Jack into tears of pity and compassion. Alighting off his horse, which he left tied to an oak-tree, and then putting on his invisible coat, under which he carried his sword of sharpness, he came up to the giant, and, though he made several passes at him, yet, nevertheless, he could not reach the trunk of his body by reason of his height, though he wounded his thighs in several places. At length, giving him a swinging stroke, he cut off both his legs, just below the knees, so that the trunk of his body made not only the ground to shake, but likewise the trees to tremble with the force of its fall, at which, by mere fortune, the knight and his lady escaped his rage. Then had Jack time to talk with him, and, setting his foot upon his neck, he said—

"Thou savage and barbarous wretch, I am come to execute upon you the just reward of your villainy," and with that, running him through and through, the monster sent forth a hideous groan, and yielded up his life into the hands of the valiant conqueror, Jack the Giant Killer, while the noble knight and virtuous lady were both joyful spectators of his sudden downfall and their deliverance.

This being done, the courteous knight and his fair lady not only returned Jack hearty thanks for

their deliverance, but also invited him home, there to refresh himself after the dreadful encounter, as likewise to receive some ample reward, by way of gratuity, for his good service.

"No," quoth Jack; "I cannot be at ease till I find out the den which was this monster's habitation."

The knight, hearing this, waxed right sorrowful and replied—

"Noble stranger, it is too much to run a second risk, for note, this monster lived in a den under yon mountain with a brother of his, more fierce and fiery than himself. Therefore, if you should go thither and perish in that attempt it would be the heart-breaking of both me and my lady. Therefore let me persuade you to go with us, and desist from any further pursuit."

"Nay," quoth Jack, "if there be another—nay, were there twenty, I would shed the last drop of blood in my body before one of them should escape my fury. When I have finished this task I will come and pay my respects to you."

So, having taken the directions to their habitation, he mounted his horse, leaving them to return home, while he went in pursuit of the deceased giant's brother. He had not ridden past a mile and a half before he came in sight of the cave's mouth, near to the entrance of which he beheld the other giant sitting upon a huge block of timber with a

knotted iron club lying by his side, waiting, as Jack supposed, for his brother's return. His goggle eyes appeared like terrible flames of fire. His countenance was grim and ugly, his cheeks being like a couple of large fat flitches of bacon. Moreover, the bristles of his beard seemed to resemble rods of iron wire. His locks hung down upon his broad shoulders, like curled snakes or hissing adders.

Jack alighted from his horse and put him into a thicket, then, with his coat of darkness, he came somewhat nearer to behold this figure, and said softly—

"Oh! are you there? It will be not long e'er I shall take you by the beard."

The giant all this time could not see him by reason of his invisible coat. So, coming up close to him, valiant Jack, fetching a blow at his head with his sword of sharpness, and missing something of his arm, cut off the giant's nose. The pain was terrible, and so he put up his hands to feel for his nose, and when he could not find it, he raved and roared louder than claps of thunder. Though he turned up his large eyes, he could not see from whence the blow came which had done him that great disaster, yet, nevertheless, he took up his iron-knotted club, and began to lay about him like one that was stark staring mad.

"Nay," quoth Jack, "if you are for that sport, then I will despatch you quickly, for I fear an accidental blow should fall on me."

Then, as the giant rose from his block, Jack makes no more to do but runs the sword up to the hilt in his body, where he left it sticking for a while, and stood himself laughing, with his hands akimbo, to see the giant caper and dance, crying out.

The giant continued raving for an hour or more, and at length fell down dead, whose dreadful fall had like to have crushed poor Jack had he not been nimble to avoid the same.

This being done, Jack cut off both the giants' heads and sent them to King Arthur by a wagoner whom he hired for the purpose, together with an account of his prosperous success in all his undertakings.

Jack, having thus despatched these monsters, resolved with himself to enter the cave in search of these giants' treasure. He passed along through many turnings and windings, which led him at length to a room paved with free-stone, at the upper end of which was a boiling cauldron. On the right hand stood a large table where, as he supposed, the giants used to dine. He came to an iron gate where was a window secured with bars of iron, through which he looked, and there beheld a vast many miserable captives, who, seeing Jack at a distance, cried out with a loud voice—

"Alas! young man, art thou come to be one amongst us in this miserable den?"

"Ay," quoth Jack, "I hope I shall not tarry

long here; but pray tell me what is the meaning of your captivity?"

"Why," said one young man, "I 'll tell you. We are persons that have been taken by the giants that keep this cave, and here we are kept till such time as they have occasion for a particular feast, and then the fattest amongst us is slaughtered and prepared for their devouring jaws. It is not long since they took three for the same purpose."

"Say you so," quoth Jack; "well, I have given them both such a dinner that it will be long enough e'er they 'll have occasion for any more."

The miserable captives were amazed at his words.

"You may believe me," quoth Jack, "for I have slain them with the point of my sword, and as for their monstrous heads, I sent them in a wagon to the court of King Arthur as trophies of my unparalleled victory."

For a testimony of the truth he had said, he unlocked the iron gate, setting the miserable captives at liberty, who all rejoiced like condemned malefactors at the sight of a reprieve. Then, leading them all together to the aforesaid room, he placed them round the table, and set before them two quarters of beef, as also bread and wine, so that he feasted them very plentifully. Supper being ended, they searched the giants' coffers, where, finding a vast store of gold and silver, Jack equally divided it among them. They all returned him

hearty thanks for their treasure and miraculous deliverance. That night they went to their rest, and in the morning they arose and departed—the captives to their respective towns and places of abode, and Jack to the house of the knight whom he had formerly delivered from the hand of the giant.

It was about sun-rising when Jack mounted his horse to proceed on his journey, and by the help of his directions he came to the knight's house some time before noon, where he was received with all demonstrations of joy imaginable by the knight and his lady, who, in honourable respect to Jack, prepared a feast, which lasted for many days, inviting all the gentry in the adjacent parts, to whom the worthy knight was pleased to relate the manner of his former danger and the happy deliverance by the undaunted courage of Jack the Giant Killer. By way of gratitude he presented Jack with a ring of gold, on which was engraved, by curious art, the picture of the giant dragging a distressed knight and his fair lady by the hair of the head, with this motto—

"We are in sad distress, you see,
Under a giant's fierce command;
But gained our lives and liberty
By valiant Jack's victorious hand.

Now, among the vast assembly there present were five aged gentlemen who were fathers to some of

those miserable captives which Jack had lately set at liberty, who, understanding that he was the person that performed those great wonders, immediately paid their venerable respects. After this their mirth increased, and the smiling bowls went freely round to the prosperous success of the victorious conqueror, but, in the midst of all this mirth, a dark cloud appeared which daunted all the hearts of the honourable assembly.

Thus it was. A messenger brought the dismal tidings of the approach of one Thundcrdel, a huge giant with two heads, who, having heard of the death of his kinsmen, the above-named giants, was come from the northern dales in search of Jack to be revenged of him for their most miserable downfall. He was now within a mile of the knight's seat, the country people flying before him from their houses and habitations, like chaff before the wind. When they had related this, Jack, not a whit daunted, said—

"Let him come. I am prepared with a tool to pick his teeth. And you, gentlemen and ladies, walk but forth into the garden, and you shall be the joyful spectators of this monstrous giant's death and destruction."

To which they consented, every one wishing him good fortune in that great and dangerous enterprise.

The situation of this knight's house take as follows: It was placed in the midst of a small island, encom-

passed round with a vast moat, thirty feet deep and twenty feet wide, over which lay a drawbridge. Jack employed two men to cut this last on both sides, almost to the middle, and then, dressing himself in his coat of darkness, likewise putting on his shoes of swiftness, he marches forth against the giant, with his sword of sharpness ready drawn. When he came up to him, yet the giant could not see Jack, by reason of his invisible coat which he had on. Yet, nevertheless, he was sensible of some approaching danger, which made him cry out in these following words—

"Fe, fi, fo, fum!
I smell the blood of an Englishman;
Be he alive or be he dead
I 'll grind his bones to make me bread."

"Sayest thou so?" quoth Jack, "then thou art a monstrous miller indeed. But what if I serve thee as I did the two giants of late? On my conscience, I should spoil your practice for the future."

At which time the giant spoke, in a voice as loud as thunder—

"Art thou that villain which destroyed my kinsmen? Then will I tear thee with my teeth, and, what is more, I will grind thy bones to powder."

"You will catch me first, sir," quoth Jack, and with that he threw off his coat of darkness that the giant might see him clearly, and then ran from him, as if through fear. The giant, with foaming mouth

and glaring eyes, followed after, like a walking castle, making the foundation of the earth, as it were, to shake at every step. Jack led him a dance three or four times round the moat belonging to the knight's house, that the gentlemen and ladies might take a full view of this huge monster of nature, who followed Jack with all his might, but could not overtake him by reason of his shoes of swiftness, which carried him faster than the giant could follow. At last Jack, to finish the work, took over the bridge, the giant with full speed pursuing after him, with his iron club upon his shoulder, but, coming to the middle of the drawbridge, what with the weight of his body and the most dreadful steps that he took, it broke down, and he tumbled full into the water, where he rolled and wallowed like a whale. Jack, standing at the side of the moat, laughed at the giant and said—

"You told me you would grind my bones to powder. Here you have water enough. Pray, where is your mill?"

The giant fretted and foamed to hear him scoff at that rate, and though he plunged from place to place in the moat, yet he could not get out to be avenged on his adversary. Jack at length got a cast rope and cast it over the giant's two heads with a slip-knot, and, by the help of a train of horses, dragged him out again, with which the giant was near strangled, and before Jack would let him loose

the morning he would venture his life to break the enchantment and free the lady, together with the rest that were miserable partners in her calamity.

Having refreshed themselves with a small morsel of meat, they laid them down to rest, and in the morning Jack arose and put on his invisible coat, cap of knowledge, and shoes of swiftness, and so prepares himself for the dangerous enterprises.

Now, when he had ascended to the top of the mountain, he soon discovered the two fiery griffins. He passed on between them without fear, for they could not see him by reason of his invisible coat. Now, when he was got beyond them, he cast his eyes around him, where he found upon the gates a golden trumpet, hung in a chain of fine silver, under which these lines were engraved—

"Whosoever shall this trumpet blow
Shall soon the giant overthrow,
And break the black enchantment straight,
So all shall be in happy state."

Jack had no sooner read this inscription but he blew the trumpet, at which time the vast foundation of the castle tumbled, and the giant, together with the conjuror, was in horrid confusion, biting their thumbs and tearing their hair, knowing their wicked reign was at an end. At that time Jack, standing at the giant's elbow, as he was stooping to take up his club, at one blow, with his sword of

sharpness, cut off his head. The conjuror, seeing this, immediately mounted into the air and was carried away in a whirlwind. Thus was the whole enchantment broken, and every knight and lady, that had been for a long time transformed into birds and beasts, returned to their proper shapes and likeness again. As for the castle, though it seemed at first to be of vast strength and bigness, it vanished in a cloud of smoke, whereupon an universal joy appeared among the released knights and ladies. This being done, the head of Galligantus was likewise, according to the accustomed manner, conveyed to the court of King Arthur, as a present made to his majesty. The very next day, after having refreshed the knights and ladies at the old man's habitation (who lived at the foot of the mountain), Jack set forward for the court of King Arthur, with those knights and ladies he had so honourably delivered.

Coming to his majesty, and having related all the passages of his fierce encounters, his fame rang though the whole court, and, as a reward for his good services, the king prevailed with the aforesaid duke to bestow his daughter in marriage to honest Jack, protesting that there was no man so worthy of her as he, to all which the duke very honourably consented. So married they were, and not only the court, but likewise the kingdom were filled with joy and triumph at the wedding. After which the king,

as a reward for all his good services done for the nation, bestowed upon him a noble habitation with a plentiful estate thereto belonging, where he and his lady lived the residue of their days in great joy and happiness.

## THE FAIRIES' CUP.

"In the province of the Deiri (Yorkshire), not far from my birthplace," says William of Newbury, "a wonderful thing occurred, which I have known from my boyhood. There is a town a few miles distant from the Eastern Sea, near which are those celebrated waters commonly called Gipse. . . . A peasant of this town went once to see a friend who lived in the next town, and it was late at night when he was coming back, not very sober, when, lo! from the adjoining barrow, which I have often seen, and which is not much over a quarter of a mile from the town, he heard the voices of people singing, and, as it were, joyfully feasting. He wondered who they could be that were breaking in that place, by their merriment, the silence of the dead night, and he wished to examine into the matter more closely. Seeing a door open in the side of the barrow he went up to it and looked in, and there he beheld a large and luminous house, full of people, women as well as men, who were reclining as at a solemn banquet. One of the attendants, seeing him standing at the door, offered him a cup.

He took it, but would not drink, and pouring out the contents, kept the vessel. A great tumult arose at the banquet on account of his taking away the cup, and all the guests pursued him, but he escaped by the fleetness of the beast he rode, and got into the town with his booty.

"Finally this vessel of unknown material, of unusual colour, and of extraordinary form, was presented to Henry the Elder, King of the English, as a valuable gift; was then given to the Queen's brother, David, King of the Scots, and was kept for several years in the treasury of Scotland. A few years ago, as I have heard from good authority, it was given by William, King of the Scots, to Henry the Second, who wished to see it."

## THE WHITE LADY

THERE was once on a time an old woman who lived near Heathfield, in Devonshire. She made a slight mistake, I do not know how, and got up at midnight, thinking it to be morning. This good woman mounted her horse, and set off, panniers, cloak, and all, on her way to market. Anon she heard a cry of hounds, and soon perceived a hare making rapidly towards her. The hare, however, took a turn and a leap and got on the top of the hedge, as if it would say to the old woman "Come, catch me." She liked such hunting as this very well, put forth her hand, secured the game, popped it into one of the panniers, covered it over, and rode forward. She had not gone far, when great was her alarm at perceiving on the dismal and solitary waste of Heathfield, advancing at full pace, a headless horse, bearing a black and grim rider, with horns sprouting from under a little jockey-cap, and having a cloven foot thrust into one stirrup. He was surrounded by a pack of hounds which had tails that whisked about and shone like fire, while the air itself had a strong sulphurous scent. These were signs not to be mis-

taken, and the poor old woman knew in a moment that huntsman and hounds were taking a ride from the regions below. It soon, however, appeared that however clever the rider might be, he was no conjuror, for he very civilly asked the old woman if she could set him right, and point out which way the hare was flown. The old woman probably thought it was no harm to pay the father of lies in his own coin, so she boldly gave him a negative, and he rode on, not suspecting the cheat. When he was out of sight the old woman perceived the hare in the pannier began to move, and at length, to her great amazement, it changed into a beautiful young lady, all in white, who thus addressed her preserver—

"Good dame, I admire your courage, and I thank you for the kindness with which you have saved me from a state of suffering that must not be told to human ears. Do not start when I tell you that I am not an inhabitant of the earth. For a great crime committed during the time I dwelt upon it, I was doomed, as a punishment in the other world, to be constantly pursued either above or below ground by evil spirits, until I could get behind their tails whilst they passed on in search of me. This difficult object, by your means, I have now happily effected, and, as a reward for your kindness, I promise that all your hens shall lay two eggs instead of one, and that your cows shall yield the most plentiful store of milk all the year round, that you

shall talk twice as much as you ever did before, and your husband stand no chance in any matter between you to be settled by the tongue. But, beware of the devil, and don't grumble about tithes, for my enemy and yours may do you an ill-turn when he finds out you were clever enough to cheat even him, since, like all great impostors, he does not like to be cheated himself. He can assume all shapes, except those of the lamb and dove."

The lady in white then vanished. The old woman found the best possible luck that morning in her traffic. And to this day the story goes in the town, that from the Saviour of the world having hallowed the form of the lamb, and the Holy Ghost that of the dove, they can never be assumed by the mortal enemy of the human race under any circumstances.

# A PLEASANT AND DELIGHTFUL HISTORY OF THOMAS HICKATHRIFT.

## I.

[From a Chap-book, printed at Whitehaven by Ann Dunn, Market Place. Probable date 1780.]

IN the reign before William the Conqueror, I have read in an ancient history that there dwelt a man in the parish of the Isle of Ely, in the county of Cambridge, whose name was Thomas Hickathrift—a poor man and a day-labourer, yet he was a very stout man, and able to perform two days' work instead of one. He having one son and no more children in the world, he called him by his own name, Thomas Hickathrift. This old man put his son to good learning, but he would take none, for he was, as we call them in this age, none of the wisest sort, but something less, and had no docility at all in him.

His father being soon called out of the world, his mother was tender of him, and maintained him by her hand labour as well as she could, he being sloth-

ful and not willing to work to get a penny for his living, but all his delight was to be in the chimney-corner, and he would eat as much at one time as would serve four or five men. He was in height, when he was but ten years of age, about eight feet; and in thickness, five feet; and his hand was like unto a shoulder of mutton; and in all his parts, from top to toe, he was like unto a monster, and yet his great strength was not known.

The first time that his strength was known was by his mother's going to a rich farmer's house (she being but a poor woman) to desire a bottle of straw for herself and her son Thomas. The farmer, being a very honest, charitable man, bid her take what she would. She going home to her son Tom, said—

"I pray, go to such a place and fetch me a bottle of straw; I have asked him leave."

He swore he would not go.

"Nay, prithee, Tom, go," said his mother.

He swore again he would not go unless she would borrow him a cart-rope. She, being willing to please him, because she would have some straw, went and borrowed him a cart-rope to his desire.

He, taking it, went his way. Coming to the farmer's house, the master was in the barn, and two men a-thrashing. Said Tom—

"I am come for a bottle of straw."

"Tom," said the master, "take as much as thou canst carry."

He laid down the cart-rope and began to make his bottle. Said they—

"Tom, thy rope is too short," and jeered poor Tom, but he fitted the man well for it, for he made his bottle, and when he had finished it, there was supposed to be a load of straw in it of two thousand pounds weight. Said they—

"What a great fool art thou. Thou canst not carry the tenth of it."

Tom took the bottle, and flung it over his shoulder, and made no more of it than we would do of a hundredweight, to the great admiration of master and man.

Tom Hickathrift's strength being then known in the town they would no longer let him lie baking by the fire in the chimney-corner. Every one would be hiring him for work. They seeing him to have so much strength told him that it was a shame for him to live such a lazy course of life, and to be idle day after day, as he did.

Tom seeing them bate him in such a manner as they did, went first to one work and then to another, but at length came to a man who would hire him to go to the wood, for he had a tree to bring home, and he would content him. Tom went with him, and took with him four men besides; but when they came to the wood they set the cart to the tree, and began to draw it up with pulleys. Tom seeing them not able to stir it, said—

"Stand away, ye fools!" then takes it up and sets it on one end and lays it in the cart.

"Now," says he, "see what a man can do!"

"Marry, it is true," said they.

When they had done, as they came through the wood, they met the woodman. Tom asked him for a stick to make his mother a fire with.

"Ay," says the woodman. "Take one that thou canst carry."

Tom espied a tree bigger than that one that was in the cart, and lays it on his shoulder, and goes home with it as fast as the cart and the six horses could draw it. This was the second time that Tom's strength was known.

When Tom began to know that he had more strength than twenty men, he then began to be merry and very tractable, and would run or jump; took great delight to be amongst company, and to go to fairs and meetings, to see sports and pastimes.

Going to a feast, the young men were all met, some to cudgels, some to wrestling, some throwing the hammer, and the like. Tom stood a little to see the sport, and at last goes to them that were throwing the hammer. Standing a little to see their manlike sport, at last he takes the hammer in his hand, to feel the weight of it, and bid them stand out of the way, for he would throw it as far as he could.

"Ay," said the smith, and jeered poor Tom. "You'll throw it a great way, I'll warrant you."

Tom took the hammer in his hand and flung it. And there was a river about five or six furlongs off, and he flung it into that. When he had done, he bid the smith fetch the hammer, and laughed the smith to scorn.

When Tom had done this exploit he would go to wrestling, though he had no more skill of it than an ass but what he did by strength, yet he flung all that came to oppose him, for if he once laid hold of them they were gone. Some he would throw over his head, some he would lay down slyly and how he pleased. He would not like to strike at their heels, but flung them two or three yards from him, ready to break their necks asunder. So that none at last durst go into the ring to wrestle with him, for they took him to be some devil that was come among them. So Tom's fame spread more and more in the country.

Tom's fame being spread abroad both far and near, there was not a man durst give him an angry word, for he was something fool-hardy, and did not care what he did unto them, so that all they that knew him would not in the least displease him. At length there was a brewer at Lynn that wanted a good lusty man to carry his beer to the Marsh and to Wisbeach, hearing of Tom, went to hire him, but Tom seemed coy, and would not be his man until his

mother and friends persuaded him, and his master entreated him. He likewise promised him that he should have a new suit of clothes and everything answerable from top to toe, besides he should eat of the best. Tom at last yielded to be his man, and his master told him how far he must go, for you must understand there was a monstrous giant kept some part of the Marsh, and none durst go that way, for if they did he would keep them or kill them, or else he would make bond slaves of them.

But to come to Tom and his master. He did more work in one day than all his men could do in three, so that his master, seeing him very tractable, and to look well after his business, made him his head man to go into the Marsh to carry beer by himself, for he needed no man with him. Tom went every day in the week to Wisbeach, which was a very good journey, and it was twenty miles the roadway.

Tom—going so long that wearisome journey, and finding that way the giant kept was nearer by half, and Tom having now got much more strength than before by being so well kept and drinking so much strong ale as he did—one day as he was going to Wisbeach, and not saying anything to his master or to any of his fellow-servants, he was resolved to make the nearest way to the wood or lose his life, to win the horse or lose the saddle, to kill or be killed, if he met with the giant. And with this

resolution he goes the nearest way with his cart and horses to go to Wisbeach; but the giant, perceiving him, and seeing him to be bold, thought to prevent him, and came, intending to take his cart for a prize, but he cared not a bit for him.

The giant met Tom like a lion, as though he would have swallowed him up at a mouthful.

"Sirrah," said he, "who gave you authority to come this way? Do you not know I make all stand in fear of my sight, and you, like an impudent rogue, must come and fling my gates open at your pleasure? How dare you presume to do this? Are you so careless of your life? I will make thee an example for all rogues under the sun. Dost thou not care what thou dost? Do you see how many heads hang upon yonder tree that have offended my law? Thy head shall hang higher than all the rest for an example!"

Tom made him answer—

"A fig for your news, for you shall not find me like one of them."

"No?" said the giant. "Why? Thou art but a fool if thou comest to fight with such a one as I am, and bring no weapon to defend thyself withal."

Said Tom—

"I have a weapon here will make you understand you are a traitorly rogue."

"Ay, sirrah," said the giant; and took that word in high disdain that Tom should call him a traitorly

rogue, and with that he ran into his cave to fetch out his club, intending to dash out Tom's brains at the first blow.

Tom knew not what to do for a weapon, for he knew his whip would do but little good against such a monstrous beast as he was, for he was in height about twelve feet, and six about the waist. While the giant went for his club, Tom bethought himself of two very good weapons, for he makes no more adò but takes his cart and turns it upside down, takes out the axle-tree, and a wheel for his shield and buckler, and very good weapons they were, especially in time of need. The giant, coming out again, began to stare at Tom, to see him take the wheel in one hand, and the axle-tree in the other, to defend him with.

"Oh," said the giant, "you are like to do great service with these weapons. I have here a twig that will beat thee and thy wheel and axle-tree to the ground."

That which the giant called a twig was as thick as some mill-posts are, but Tom was not daunted for his big and threatening speech, for he perfectly saw there was no way except one, which was to kill or be killed. So the giant made at Tom with such a vehement force that he made Tom's wheel crack again, and Tom lent the giant as good, for he took him such a weighty blow on the side of his head, that he made the giant reel again.

"What," said Tom, "are you drunk with my strong beer already?"

The giant, recovering, laid on Tom, but still as they came, Tom kept them off with his wheel, so that he had no hurt at all. In short, Tom plied his work so well, and laid such huge blows on the giant that sweat and blood together ran down his face, and, being fat and foggy with fighting so long, he was almost tired out, and he asked Tom to let him drink a little water, and then he would fight him again.

"No," said Tom, "my mother did not teach me that wit. Who would be the fool then?"

Tom, seeing the giant began to grow weary, and that he failed in his blows, thought it was best to make hay while the sun did shine, for he laid on so fast as though he had been mad, till he brought the giant down to the ground.

The giant seeing himself down, and Tom laying so hard on him, made him roar in a most lamentable manner, and prayed him not to take away his life and he would do anything for him, and yield himself to him to be his servant.

But Tom, having no more mercy on him than a dog or a bear, laid still on the giant till he laid him for dead. When he had done, he cut off his head, and went into his cave, where he found great store of gold and silver, which made his heart leap.

Now, having done this action in killing the giant,

he put his cart together again, loaded it, and drove it to Wisbeach and delivered his beer, and, coming home to his master, he told it to him. His master was so overjoyed at the news that he would not believe him till he had seen; and, getting up the next day, he and his master went to see if he spoke the truth or not, together with most of the town of Lynn. When they came to the place and found the giant dead, he then showed the place where the head was, and what silver and gold there was in the cave. All of them leaped for joy, for this monster was a great enemy to all the country.

This news was spread all up and down the country, how Tom Hickathrift had killed the giant, and well was he that could run or go to see the giant and his cave. Then all the folks made bonfires for joy, and Tom was a better respected man than before.

Tom took possession of the giant's cave by consent of the whole country, and every one said he deserved twice as much more. Tom pulled down the cave and built him a fine house where the cave stood, and in the ground that the giant kept by force and strength, some of which he gave to the poor for their common, the rest he made pastures of, and divided the most part into tillage to maintain him and his mother, Jane Hickathrift.

Tom's fame was spread both far and near throughout the country, and it was no longer Tom but Mr. Hickathrift, so that he was now the chiefest

man among them, for the people feared Tom's anger as much as they did the giant before. Tom kept men and maid servants, and lived most bravely. He made a park to keep deer in. Near to his house he built a church and gave it the name of St. James's Church, because he killed the giant on that day, which is so called to this hour. He did many good deeds, and became a public benefactor to all persons that lived near him.

Tom having got so much money about him, and being not used to it, could hardly tell how to dispose of it, but yet he did use the means to do it, for he kept a pack of hounds and men to hunt with him, and who but Tom then? So he took such delight in sports that he would go far and near to any meetings, as cudgel-play, bear baiting, football, and the like.

Now as Tom was riding one day, he alighted off his horse to see that sport, for they were playing for a wager. Tom was a stranger, and none did know him there. But Tom spoiled their sport, for he, meeting the football, took it such a kick, that they never found their ball more. They could see it fly, but whither none could tell. They all wondered at it, and began to quarrel with Tom, but some of them got nothing by it, for Tom gets a great spar which belonged to a house that was blown down, and all that stood in his way he knocked down, so that all the county was up in arms to take Tom,

but all in vain, for he manfully made way wherever he came.

When he was gone from them, and returning homewards, he chanced to be somewhat late in the evening on the road. There met him four stout, lusty rogues that had been robbing passengers that way, and none could escape them, for they robbed all they met, both rich and poor. They thought when they met with Tom he would be a good prize for them, and, perceiving he was alone made cock-sure of his money, but they were mistaken, for he got a prize by them. Whereupon, meeting him, they bid him stand and deliver.

"What," said Tom, "shall I deliver?"

"Your money, sirrah," said they.

"But," said Tom, "you will give me better words for it, and you must be better armed."

"Come, come," said they, "we do not come here to parley, but we come for money, and money we will have before we stir from this place."

"Ay!" said Tom. "Is it so? Then get it and take it."

So then one of them made at him, but he presently unarmed him and took away his sword, which was made of good trusty steel, and smote so hard at the others that they began to put spurs to their horses and be-gone. But he soon stayed their journey, for one of them having a portmanteau behind him, Tom, supposing there was money in it, fought with a great

deal of more courage than before, till at last he killed two of the four, and the other two he wounded very sore so that they cried out for quarter. With much ado he gave them their lives, but took all their money, which was about two hundred pounds, to bear his expenses home. Now when Tom came home he told them how he had served the football-players and the four highwaymen, which caused a laughter from his old mother. Then, refreshing himself, he went to see how all things were, and what his men had done since he went from home.

Then going into his forest, he walked up and down, and at last met with a lusty tinker that had a good staff on his shoulder, and a great dog to carry his leather bag and tools of work. Tom asked the tinker from whence he came, and whither he was going, for that was no highway. The tinker, being a sturdy fellow, bid him go look, and what was that to him, for fools would be meddling.

"No," says Tom, "but I'll make you know, before you and I part, it is me."

"Ay!" said the tinker, "I have been this three long years, and have had no combat with any man, and none durst make me an answer. I think they be all cowards in this country, except it be a man who is called Thomas Hickathrift who killed a giant. Him I would fain see to have one combat with him."

"Ay!" said Tom, "but, methinks, I might be

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master in your mouth. I am the man: what have you to say to me?"

"Why," said the tinker, "verily, I am glad we have met so happily together, that we may have one single combat."

"Sure," said Tom, "you do but jest?"

"Marry," said the tinker, "I am in earnest."

"A match," said Tom. "Will you give me leave to get a twig?"

"Ay," says the tinker. "Hang him that will fight a man unarmed. I scorn that."

Tom steps to the gate, and takes one of the rails for his staff. So they fell to work. The tinker at Tom and Tom at the tinker, like unto two giants, they laid one at the other. The tinker had on a leathern coat, and at every blow Tom gave the tinker his coat cracked again, yet the tinker did not give way to Tom an inch, but Tom gave the tinker a blow on the side of the head which felled the tinker to the ground.

"Now, tinker, where are you?" said Tom.

But the tinker, being a man of metal, leaped up again, and gave Tom a blow which made him reel again, and followed his blows, and then took Tom on the other side, which made Tom's neck crack again. Tom flung down the weapon, and yielded the tinker to be the best man, and took him home to his house, where I shall leave Tom and the tinker to be recovered of their many wounds and bruises, which

relation is more enlarged as you may read in the second part of Thomas Hickathrift.

## II.

[From a Chap-book. The book bears no date or note as to where or by whom it was printed. It was probably printed at London about the year 1780.]

In and about the Isle of Ely many disaffected persons, to the number of ten thousand and upwards, drew themselves up in a body, presuming to contend for their pretended ancient rights and liberties, insomuch that the gentry and civil magistrates of the country were in great danger, at which time the sheriff, by night, privately got into the house of Thomas Hickathrift as a secure place of refuge in so imminent a time of danger, where before Thomas Hickathrift he laid open the villainous intent of this headstrong, giddy-brained multitude.

"Mr. Sheriff," quoth Tom, "what service my brother" (meaning the tinker) "and I can perform shall not be wanting."

This said, in the morning by daybreak, with trusty clubs, they both went forth, desiring the Sheriff to be their guide in conducting them to the place of the rebels' rendezvous. When they came there, Tom and the tinker marched up to the head of

the multitude, and demanded of them the reason why they disturbed the government, to which they answered with a loud cry—

"Our will's our law, and by that alone we will be governed."

"Nay," quoth Tom, "if it be so, these trusty clubs are our weapons, and by them you shall be chastised," which words were no sooner out of his mouth than the tinker and he put themselves both together in the midst of the throng, and with their clubs beat the multitude down, trampling them under their feet. Every blow which they struck laid twenty or thirty before them, nay—remarkable it was, the tinker struck a tall man, just upon the nape of the neck, with that force that his head flew off and was carried violently fourteen feet from him, where it knocked down one of their chief ring-leaders,—Tom, on the other hand, still pressing forward, till by an unfortunate blow he broke his club. Yet he was not in the least dismayed, for he presently seized upon a lusty, stout, raw-boned miller, and made use of him for a weapon, till at length they cleared the field, so that there was not found one that dare lift up a hand against them, having run to holes and corners to hide themselves. Shortly after some of their heads were taken and made public examples of justice, the rest being pardoned at the humble request of Thomas Hickathrift and the tinker.

The king, being truly informed of the faithful services performed by these his loving subjects, Thomas Hickathrift and the tinker, he was pleased to send for them to his palace, where a royal banquet was prepared for their entertainment, most of the nobility being present. Now after the banquet was over, the king said unto all that were there—

"These are my trusty and well-beloved subjects, men of approved courage and valour. They are the men that overcame and conquered ten thousand, which were got together to disturb the peace of my realm. According to the character that hath been given to Thomas Hickathrift and Henry Nonsuch, persons here present, they cannot be matched in any other kingdom in the world. Were it possible to have an army of twenty thousand such as these, I dare venture to act the part of Alexander the Great over again, yet, in the meanwhile, as a proof of my royal favour, kneel down and receive the ancient order of knighthood, Mr. Hickathrift," which was instantly performed.

"And as for Henry Nonsuch, I will settle upon him, as a reward for his great service, the sum of forty shillings a year, during life," which said, the king withdrew, and Sir Thomas Hickathrift and Henry Nonsuch, the tinker, returned home, attended by many persons of quality some miles from the court. But, to the great grief of Sir Thomas, at his return from the court, he found his aged mother

drawing to her end, who, in a few days after, died, and was buried in the Isle of Ely.

Tom's mother being dead, and he left alone in a large and spacious house, he found himself strange and uncouth, therefore he began to consider with himself that it would not be amiss to seek out for a wife. Hearing of a young rich widow, not far from Cambridge, to her he went and made his addresses, and, at the first coming, she seemed to show him much favour and countenance, but between this and his coming again she had given some entertainment to a more genteel and airy spark, who happened likewise to come while honest Tom was there the second time. He looked wistfully at Tom, and he stared as wistfully at him again. At last the young spark began with abuseful language to affront Tom, telling him that he was a great lubberly whelp, adding that such a one as he should not pretend to make love to a lady, as he was but a brewer's servant.

"Scoundrel!" quoth Tom, "better words should become you, and if you do not mend your manners you shall not fail to feel my sharp correction."

At which the young spark challenged him forth into the back-yard, for, as he said, he did not question but to make a fool of Tom in a trice. Into the yard they both walk together, the young spark with a naked sword, and Tom with neither stick nor staff in his hand nor any other weapon.

"What!" says the spark, "have you nothing to

defend yourself? Well, I shall the sooner despatch you."

Which said, he ran furiously forward, making a pass at Tom, which he put by, and then, wheeling round, Tom gave him such a swinging kick as sent the spark, like a crow, up into the air, from whence he fell upon the ridge of a thatched house, and then came down into a large fish-pond, and had been certainly drowned if it had not been for a poor shepherd who was walking that way, and, seeing him float upon the water, dragged him out with his hook, and home he ran, like a drowned rat, while Tom returned to the lady.

This young gallant being tormented in his mind to think how Tom had conquered and shamed him before his mistress, he was now resolved for speedy revenge, and knowing that he was not able to cope with a man of Tom's strength and activity, he, therefore, hired two lusty troopers to lie in ambush in a thicket which Tom was to pass through from his home to the young lady. Accordingly they attempted to set upon him.

"How, now," quoth Tom, "rascals, what would you be at? Are you, indeed, weary of the world that you so unadvisedly set upon one who is able to crush you in like a cucumber?"

The troopers, laughing at him, said that they were not to be daunted at his high words.

"High words," quoth Tom. "No, I will come to

action," and with that he ran in between these armed troopers, catching them under his arm, horse and men, with as much ease as if they had been but a couple of baker's babbins, steering his course with them hastily towards his own home. As he passed through a meadow, in which there were many haymakers at work, the poor distressed troopers cried out—

"Stop him! stop him! He runs away with two of the king's troopers."

The haymakers laughed heartily to see how Tom hugged them along. Ever and anon he upbraided them for their baseness, and declared that he would make minced meat of them to feed the crows and jackdaws about his house and habitation. This was such a dreadful lecture to them that the poor rogues begged that he would be merciful and spare their lives, and they would discover the whole plot, and who was the person that employed them. This accordingly they did, and gained favour in the sight of Tom, who pardoned them upon promise that they would never be concerned in such a villainous action for the time to come.

In regard Tom had been hindered by these troopers, he delayed his visit to his lady till the next day, and then, coming to her, gave her a full account of what had happened. She was pleased at heart at this wonderful relation, knowing it was safe for a woman to marry with a man who was able

to defend her against all assaults whatsoever, and such a one she found Tom to be. The day of marriage was accordingly appointed, and friends and relations invited, yet secret malice, which is never satisfied without sweet revenge, had like to have prevented the solemnity, for, having three miles to go to church, where they were to be married, the aforesaid gentleman had provided a second time Russians in armour, to the number of twenty-one, he himself being then present, either to destroy the life of Tom, or put them into strange consternation. However, thus it happened. In a lonesome place they rolled out upon them, making their first assault upon Tom, and, with a spear, gave him a slight wound, at which his love and the rest of the women shrieked and cried like persons out of their wits. Tom endeavoured all that he could to pacify them, saying—

"Stand you still and I will show you pleasant sport."

With that he caught a back-sword from the side of a gentleman in his own company, with which he so bravely behaved himself that at every stroke he cut off a joint. Loath he was to touch the life of any, but, aiming at their legs and arms, he lopped them off so fast that, in less than a quarter of an hour, there was not one in the company but what had lost a limb, the green grass being stained with their purple gore, and the ground strewn with legs

and arms, as 'tis with tiles from the tops of the houses after a dreadful storm—his love and the rest of the company standing all the while as joyful spectators, laughing one at another, saying—

"What a company of cripples has he made, as it were in the twinkling of an eye!"

"Yes," quoth Tom, "I believe that for every drop of blood that I lost, I have made the rascals pay me a limb as a just tribute."

This done, he stept to a farmer's hard by, and hired there a servant, giving him twenty shillings to carry these cripples home to their respective habitations in his cart. Then did he hasten with his love to the church to be married, and then returned home, where they were heartily merry with their friends, after their fierce and dreadful encounter.

Now, Tom being married, he made a plentiful feast, to which he invited all the poor widows in four or five parishes, for the sake of his mother, whom he had lately buried. This feast was kept in his own house, with all manner of varieties that the country could afford, for the space of four days, in honour likewise of the four victories which he had lately obtained. Now, when the time of feasting was ended, a silver cup was missing, and, being asked about it, they every one denied they knew anything about it. At length it was agreed that they should all stand the search, which they did, and the cup was

found on a certain old woman, named the widow Stumbelow. Then were all the rest in a rage. Some were for hanging her, others were for chopping the old woman in pieces for her ingratitude to such a generous soul as Sir Thomas Hickathrift, but he entreated them all to be quiet, saying they should not murder the old woman, for he would appoint a punishment for her himself, which was this—he bored a hole through her nose, and, tying a string therein, then ordered her to be led by the nose through all the streets and lanes in Cambridge.

The tidings of Tom's wedding were soon noised in the court, so that the king sent them a royal invitation to the end that he might see his lady. They immediately went, and were received with all demonstrations of joy and triumph, but while they were in their mirth a dreadful cry approached the court, which proved to be the commons of Kent who were come thither to complain of a dreadful giant that was landed in one of the islands, and brought with him abundance of bears and young lions, likewise a dreadful dragon, on which he himself rode, which monster and ravenous beasts had frightened all the inhabitants out of the island. Moreover, they said, if speedy course was not taken to suppress them in time, they might overrun the whole island. The king, hearing this dreadful relation, was a little startled, yet he persuaded them to return home and make the best defence they could for themselves at

present, assuring them that he should not forget them, and so they departed.

The king, hearing the aforesaid dreadful tidings, immediately sat in council to consider what was to be done for the overcoming this monstrous giant, and barbarous savage lions and beasts, that with him had invaded his princely territories. At length it was agreed upon that Thomas Hickathrift was the most likely man in the whole kingdom for undertaking of so dangerous an enterprise, he being not only a fortunate man of great strength, but likewise a true and trusty subject, one that was always ready and willing to do his king and country service. For which reason it was thought necessary to make him governor of the aforesaid island, which place of trust and honour he readily received, and accordingly he forthwith went down with his wife and family, attended by a hundred knights and gentlemen, who conducted him to the entrance of the island which he was to govern. A castle in those days there was, in which he was to take up his head-quarters, the same being situated with that advantage that he could view the island for several miles upon occasion. The knights and gentlemen, at last taking their leave of him, wished him all happy success and prosperity. Many days he had not been there when it was his fortune to behold this monstrous giant, mounted upon a dreadful dragon, bearing upon his shoulder a club of iron,

having but one eye, the which was placed in his forehead, and larger in compass than a barber's basin, and seemed to appear like a flaming fire. His visage was dreadful, grim and tawny; the hair of his head hanging down his back and shoulders like snakes of a prodigious length; the bristles of his beard being like rusty wire. Lifting up his blare eye, he happened to discover Sir Thomas Hickathrift, who was looking upon him from one of his windows of the castle. The giant then began to knit his brow and breathe forth threatening words to the governor, who, indeed, was a little surprised at the approach of so monstrous a brute. The giant, finding that Tom did not make much haste down to meet him, alighted from the back of the dragon, and chained the same to an oak-tree. Then, marching furiously to the castle, he set his broad shoulder against a corner of the stone walls, as if he intended to overthrow the whole building at once, which Tom perceiving, said—

"Is this the game you would be at? Faith, I shall spoil your sport, for I have a delicate tool to pick your teeth withal."

Then, taking his two-handed sword of five foot long, a weapon which the king had given him to govern with,—taking this, I say, down he went, and flinging open the gates, he there found the giant, who, by an unfortunate slip in his thrusting, was fallen all along, where he lay and could not help himself.

"What!" quoth Tom, "do you come here to take up your lodging? This is not to be suffered."

With that he ran his long broad-sword into the giant's body, which made the monstrous brute give such a terrible groan that it seemed like roaring thunder, making the very neighbouring trees to tremble. Then Tom, pulling out his sword again, at six or seven blows separated his head from his unconscionable trunk, which head, when it was off, seemed like the root of a mighty oak. Then turning to the dragon, which was all this while chained to a tree, without any further discourse, with four blows with his two-handed sword, he cut off his head also. This fortunate adventure being over, he sent immediately for a team of horses and a wagon, which he loaded with these heads. Then, summoning all the constables in the country for a guard, he sent them to the court, with a promise to his majesty that he would rid the whole island likewise of bears and lions before he left it. Tom's victories rang so long that they reached the ears of his old acquaintance the tinker, who, desirous of honour, resolved to go down and visit Tom in his new government. Coming there, he met with kind and loving entertainment, for they were very joyful to see one another. Now, after three or four days' enjoyment of one another's company, Tom told the tinker that he must needs go forth in search after wild bears and lions, in order to rout them out of the island.

"Well," quoth the tinker, "I would gladly take my fortune with you, hoping that I may be serviceable to you upon occasion."

"Well," quoth Tom, "with all my heart, for I must needs acknowledge I shall be right glad of your company."

This said, they both went forward, Tom with his two-handed sword, and the tinker with his long pike-staff. Now, after they had travelled about four or five hours, it was their fortune to light on the whole knot of wild beasts together, of which six of them were bears, the other eight young lions. Now, when they had fastened their eyes on Tom and the tinker, these ravenous beasts began to roar and run furiously, as if they would have devoured them at a mouthful. Tom and the tinker stood, side by side, with their backs against an oak, and as the lions and bears came within their reach, Tom, with his long sword, clove their heads asunder till they were all destroyed, saving one lion who, seeing the rest of his fellows slain, was endeavouring to escape. Now the tinker, being somewhat too venturous, ran too hastily after him, and, having given the lion one blow, he turned upon him again, seizing him by the throat with that violence that the poor tinker fell dead to the ground. Tom Hickathrift, seeing this, gave the lion such a blow that it ended his life.

Now was his joy mingled with sorrow, for though he had cleared the island of those ravenous savage

beasts, yet his grief was intolerable for the loss of his old friend. Home he returned to his lady, where, in token of joy for the wonderful success which he had in his dangerous enterprises, he made a very noble and splendid feast, to which he invited most of his best friends and acquaintances, to whom he made the following promise—

"My friends, while I have strength to stand,
Most manfully I will pursue
All dangers, till I clear this land
Of lions, bears, and tigers too.
This you 'll find true, or I 'm to blame,
Let it remain upon record,
Tom Hickathrift's most glorious fame,
Who never yet has broke his word.

The man who does his country bless
Shall merit much from this fair land;
He who relieved them in distress
His fame upon record shall stand.
And you, my friends, who hear me now,
Let honest Tom for ever dwell
Within your minds and thoughts, I trow,
Since he has pleased you all so well."

## THE SPECTRE COACH.

COBBLERS are a thoughtful race of men, and Tom Shanks was one of their number. He lived in the little village of Acton, in Suffolk, and it was there that an adventure befell him, which, as I am informed by a grandson of his, "had an effect on him from that day to this"—though the "this" in the present case is of a somewhat vague meaning, seeing that Tom has unfortunately been dead some twenty years at least. The terrible adventure that befell him was so much the subject of Tom's talk, that if ever tale could be handed down by means of oral tradition sure Tom's story should be intact in every detail.

It seems that one day Tom left Acton on a journey—quite a remarkable event for him, for he was a quiet-going fellow, not given to running away from his last, but sitting contentedly in his little shop, busily employed in providing his neighbours with good foot-gear. On this day, however, Tom was called away by the intelligence that a sister of his, who was in service in a town some little distance away, was ill and wished to see him. The little

cobbler was a man with a warm heart, and as soon as he received this ill news he laid aside a pair of shoes he was on for the parson, and which he was very anxious to finish, for the sooner he touched the money the better for him and his; put on his best coat, took his stick in his hand, and, having bid farewell to his wife and three little ones, went on his way, looking back now and then to shake his stick to them, till he came to the turn in the road by the side of the high trees when he could see them no more.

Well, he walked on, and being a stout-hearted little fellow without much flesh to carry, for cobbling did not even in those days bring in a fortune, and Tom and his folk often had hard times of it; he, in the course of the morning, with a slice out of the afternoon, arrived at his destination. There, thank God, he found his sister much better than he might have expected, judging from the account he had heard of her, and having stayed an hour or two to rest his legs, and recruit his stomach with some beef and a pint of ale, he set out on his way homeward.

The way back seemed much longer than it ought to have been, and Tom cleared the ground very slowly. Before he had gone far the night closed in; but what was that to him, for he knew every inch of the road; and as to thieves, why, he had little enough in his pocket to tempt them, and if need be—

and Tom was not for his size deficient in courage—he had a good stout stick to defend himself with. Still it was dismal work that tramp through lonely lanes, with the trees standing on each side—not bright and lively as they had been in the day-time, with the sun shining on their leaves, and the wind rustling amongst them, but drawn up, still and dark, like sentinels watching in big cloaks. The day had closed in with clouds, which threatened to make the cobbler's journey more miserable with a down-pour of rain. But this fortunately kept off, and the moon, having risen, looked out now and then between the clouds, and a star or two winked in a style which brought comfort to Tom's heart—they seemed so companionable.

So he went on and on, till at length he came to the neighbourhood of Acton again; and glad enough he was once more to find himself in quarters where the very trees and gates and stiles seemed, as it were, to be old friends—Tom having been used to the sight of them daily for as many years as had passed since he was born, and those were not a few, for he was not exactly a chicken.

Well, he came at length to the park gates, and was hurrying past them, for the spot had no particularly good name, and he remembered that he had heard some queer tales concerning sights folk had chanced to see there which they would very much sooner have escaped, when on a sudden his

legs seemed, as it were, to refuse to stir, and with his heart thumping against his ribs, as if it would beat a way out for itself, Tom came to a dead stand. What was it that he heard? It seemed like a rushing and grinding of stones, with a cracking like a body of men walking over dry sticks. It could not be the wind, for there was not a breath stirring, and the leaves on the trees lay perfectly still. The noise came nearer and nearer, and the next thought of Tom was that he would like to hide himself in some of the dark shadows around him. But his legs would not stir, and it was as much as he could do, with the aid of his stick, to hold himself up on them. To make matters worse, the moon now, just as the cobbler was wishing for darkness, broke out from a cloud, and cast its light all about him, as if with the very object of showing him up. It is true the light enabled him to have a good look about him, but that was not a thing Tom very much cared about just then.

He stood there a few moments, with the sound coming louder and louder, till it seemed to be just at hand. It was evidently in the park itself. Now it was at the gate. Then, all of a sudden, the gates swung back with a terrible clang, and there issued as strange a procession as Tom's, or indeed mortal's, eyes ever set on. First there came two grooms on horses, and then a carriage drawn by four large steeds, while two men rode behind. They were

all goodly looking men enough, and the horses were, as Tom saw at a glance, as pretty pieces of flesh as any man might wish to throw leg across, but one thing struck horror to the cobbler's heart as he looked, for he saw that none of the horsemen had a head on him. On they dashed at a break-neck speed, their horses' hoofs seeming to dash fire from the stones on the road, while the wheels of the coach looked like four bright circles, so fast was it drawn over the ground. Cracking their whips, as if to urge the steeds on to even greater speed, the men rode on, nor did Tom hear them utter a word as they swept past him.

As the coach went by him, and his eyes were glued upon it, the interior of the carriage seemed to him to be lighted up in some mysterious manner, and inside, Tom said, he clearly saw a gentleman and a lady, for such they evidently were by their dress, sitting side by side, but without heads like their attendants.

Another minute and all was gone. Tom rubbed his eyes and wondered if he had not been asleep, but who ever heard of a man falling asleep standing up with no better prop than a stick in his hand? He looked at the gates. They were closed and fast. He looked down the road, but could distinguish nothing. In the distance, however, he could hear the sound of, as it were, a big gust of wind gradually travelling away, while all around him was still.

It did not take him long to get home after that, you may be sure, and when he told his story, though there were some that laughed and hinted that Tom was trying to make a hero of himself by pretending that he had seen what no one else of those he told the story to had set eyes on, yet the old folk remembered that they themselves had spoken with folk who had seen the very same sight for themselves, so I think that Tom Shanks has the very best claim to be considered the last man in the place who ever witnessed the progress of the spectre coach.

## THE BAKER'S DAUGHTER.

A VERY long time ago, I cannot tell you when, it is so long since, there lived in a town in Herefordshire a baker who used to sell bread to all the folk around. He was a mean, greedy man, who sought in every way to put money by, and who did not scruple to cheat such people as he was able when they came to his shop.

He had a daughter who helped him in his business, being unmarried and living with him, and seeing how her father treated the people, and how he succeeded in getting money by his bad practices, she, too, in time came to do the like.

One day when her father was away, and the girl remained alone in the shop, an old woman came in—

"My pretty girl," said she, "give me a bit of dough I beg of you, for I am old and hungry."

The girl at first told her to be off, but as the old woman would not go, and begged harder than before for a piece of bread, at last the baker's daughter took up a piece of dough, and giving it to her, says—

"There now, be off, and do not trouble me any more."

"My dear," says the woman, "you have given me a piece of dough, let me bake it in your oven, for I have no place of my own to bake it in."

"Very well," replied the girl, and, taking the dough, she placed it in the oven, while the old woman sat down to wait till it was baked.

When the girl thought the bread should be ready she looked in the oven expecting to find there a small cake, and was very much amazed to find instead a very large loaf of bread. She pretended to look about the oven as if in search of something.

"I cannot find the cake," said she. "It must have tumbled into the fire and got burnt."

"Very well," said the old woman, "give me another piece of dough instead and I will wait while it bakes."

So the girl took another piece of dough, smaller than the first piece, and having put it in the oven, shut to the door. At the end of a few minutes or so she looked in again, and found there another loaf, larger than the last.

"Dear me," said she, pretending to look about her, "I have surely lost the dough again. There 's no cake here."

"'Tis a pity," said the old woman, "but never mind. I will wait while you bake me another piece."

So the baker's daughter took a piece of dough as small as one of her fingers and put it in the oven, while the old woman sat near. When she thought it ought to be baked, she looked into the oven and there saw a loaf, larger than either of the others.

"That is mine," said the old woman.

"No," replied the girl. "How could such a large loaf have grown out of a little piece of dough?"

"It is mine, it is sure," said the woman.

"It is not," said the girl, "and you shall not have it."

Well, when the old woman saw that the girl would not give her the loaf, and saw how she had tried to cheat her, for she was a fairy, and knew all the tricks that the baker's daughter had put upon her, she draws out from under her cloak a stick, and just touches the girl with it. Then a wonderful thing occurred, for the girl became all of a sudden changed into an owl, and flying about the room, at last, made for the door, and, finding it open, she flew out and was never seen again.

## THE FAIRY CHILDREN.

"ANOTHER wonderful thing," says Ralph of Coggeshall, "happened in Suffolk, at St. Mary's of the Wolf-pits.

A boy and his sister were found by the inhabitants of that place near the mouth of a pit which is there, who had the form of all their limbs like to those of other men, but they were different in the colour of their skin from all the people of our habitable world, for the whole surface of their skin was tinged of a green colour. No one could understand their speech.

When they were brought as curiosities to the house of a certain knight, Sir Richard de Calne, at Wikes, they wept bitterly. Bread and victuals were set before them, but they would touch none of them, though they were tormented by great hunger, as the girl afterwards acknowledged. At length when some beans, just cut, with their stalks, were brought into the house, they made signs, with great avidity, that they should be given to them. When they were brought they opened the stalks instead of the pods, thinking the beans were in the hollow of them.

But not finding them there, they began to weep anew. When those who were present saw this, they opened the pods, and showed them the naked beans. They fed on these with great delight, and for a long time tasted no other food. The boy, however, was always languid and depressed, and he died within a short time.

The girl enjoyed continual good health, and, becoming accustomed to various kinds of food, lost completely that green colour, and gradually recovered the sanguine habit of her entire body. She was afterwards regenerated by the laver of holy baptism, and lived for many years in the service of that knight, as I have frequently heard from him and his family.

Being frequently asked about the people of her country, she asserted that the inhabitants, and all they had in that country, were of a green colour, and that they saw no sun, but enjoyed a degree of light like what is after sunset. Being asked how she came into this country with the aforesaid boy, she replied, that, as they were following their flocks, they came to a certain cavern, on entering which they heard a delightful sound of bells, ravished by whose sweetness they went on for a long time wandering on through the cavern, until they came to its mouth. When they came out of it, they were struck senseless by the excessive light of the sun, and the unusual temperature of the air, and they

thus lay for a long time. Being terrified by the noise of those who came on them, they wished to fly, but they could not find the entrance of the cavern before they were caught."

This story is also told by William of Newbury, who places it in the reign of King Stephen. He says he long hesitated to believe it, but was at length overcome by the weight of evidence. According to him, the place where the children appeared, was about four or five miles from Bury-St.-Edmund's. They came in harvest-time out of the Wolf-pits. They both lost their green hue, and were baptized, and learned English. The boy, who was the younger, died, but the girl married a man at Lenna, and lived many years. They said their country was called St. Martin's Land, as that saint was chiefly worshipped there; that the people were Christians, and had churches; that the sun did not rise there, but that there was a bright country which could be seen from theirs, being divided from it by a very broad river.

# THE HISTORY OF JACK AND THE BEANSTALK.

[From a Chap-book printed at Paisley, by G. Caldwell, bookseller. Probable date, 1810]

IN the days of King Alfred there lived a poor woman whose cottage was situated in a remote country village, a great many miles from London.

She had been a widow some years, and had an only child named Jack, whom she indulged to a fault. The consequence of her blind partiality was, that Jack did not pay the least attention to anything she said, but was indolent, careless, and extravagant. His follies were not owing to a bad disposition, but that his mother had never checked him. By degrees she disposed of all she possessed —scarcely anything remained but a cow.

The poor woman one day met Jack with tears in her eyes. Her distress was great, and, for the first time in her life, she could not help reproaching him, saying—

"O you wicked child! by your ungrateful course of life you have at last brought me to beggary and ruin. Cruel, cruel boy! I have not

money enough to purchase even a bit of bread for another day. Nothing now remains to sell but my poor cow. I am sorry to part with her. It grieves me sadly, but we must not starve."

For a few minutes Jack felt a degree of remorse, but it was soon over, and he began teasing his mother to let him sell the cow at the next village so much, that she at last consented.

As he was going along he met a butcher, who inquired why he was driving the cow from home. Jack replied he was going to sell it. The butcher held some curious beans in his hat that were of various colours and attracted Jack's notice. This did not pass unnoticed by the butcher, who, knowing Jack's easy temper, thought now was the time to take advantage of it, and, determined not to let slip so good an opportunity, asked what was the price of the cow, offering at the same time all the beans in his hat for her. The silly boy could not conceal the pleasure he felt at what he supposed so great an offer. The bargain was struck instantly, and the cow exchanged for a few paltry beans. Jack made the best of his way home, calling aloud to his mother before he reached the house, thinking to surprise her.

When she saw the beans and heard Jack's account, her patience quite forsook her. She kicked the beans away in a passion—they flew in all directions —some were scattered in the garden. Not having

anything to eat, they both went supperless to bed.

Jack awoke very early in the morning, and seeing something uncommon from the window of his bed-chamber, ran downstairs into the garden, where he soon discovered that some of the beans had taken root and sprung up surprisingly. The stalks were of an immense thickness, and had so entwined that they formed a ladder nearly like a chain in appearance.

Looking upwards, he could not discern the top. It appeared to be lost in the clouds. He tried the stalk, found it firm, and not to be shaken. He quickly formed the resolution of endeavouring to climb up to the top in order to seek his fortune, and ran to communicate his intention to his mother, not doubting but she would be equally pleased with himself. She declared he should not go; said it would break her heart if he did; entreated and threatened, but all in vain.

Jack set out, and, after climbing for some hours, reached the top of the beanstalk, fatigued and quite exhausted. Looking around, he found himself in a strange country. It appeared to be a desert, quite barren, not a tree, shrub, house, or living creature to be seen. Here and there were scattered fragments of stone, and at unequal distances small heaps of earth were loosely thrown together.

Jack seated himself, pensively, upon a block of stone, and thought of his mother. He reflected

with sorrow on his disobedience in climbing the beanstalk against her will, and concluded that he must die of hunger.

However, he walked on, hoping to see a house where he might beg something to eat and drink. Presently a handsome young woman appeared at a distance. As she approached Jack could not help admiring how beautiful and lively she looked. She was dressed in the most elegant manner, and had a small white wand in her hand, on the top of which was a peacock of pure gold.

While Jack was looking, with the greatest surprise, at this charming female, she came up to him, and, with a smile of the most bewitching sweetness, inquired how he came there. Jack related the circumstance of the beanstalk. She asked him if he recollected his father. He replied he did not, and added there must be some mystery relating to him, because if he asked his mother who his father was she always burst into tears and appeared to be violently agitated, nor did she recover herself for some days after. One thing, however, he could not avoid observing on these occasions, which was, that she always carefully avoided answering him, and even seemed afraid of speaking, as if there were some secret connected with his father's history which she must not disclose.

The young woman replied—

"I will reveal the whole story. Your mother

must not do so. But before I begin I require a solemn promise on your part to do what I command. I am a fairy, and, if you do not perform exactly what I desire, you will be destroyed."

Jack was frightened at her menaces, and promised to fulfil her injunctions exactly, and the fairy thus addressed him—

"Your father was a rich man. His disposition was very benevolent. He was very good to the poor, and constantly relieved them. He made it a rule never to let a day pass without doing good to some person. On one particular day in the week he kept open house, and invited only those who were reduced and had lived well. He always presided himself, and did all in his power to render his guests comfortable. The rich and the great were next invited. The servants were all happy and greatly attached to their master and mistress. Your father, though only a private gentleman, was as rich as a prince, and he deserved all he possessed, for he only lived to do good. Such a man was soon known and talked of. A giant lived a great many miles off. This man was altogether as wicked as your father was good. He was, in his heart, envious, covetous, and cruel, but he had the art of concealing those vices. He was poor, and wished to enrich himself at any rate.

"Hearing your father spoken of, he formed the design of becoming acquainted with him, hoping to

ingratiate himself into your father's favour. He removed quickly into your neighbourhood, and caused it to be reported that he was a gentleman who had just lost all he possessed by an earthquake and had found it difficult to escape with his life. His wife was with him. Your father gave credit to his story and pitied him. He gave him handsome apartments in his own house, and caused him and his wife to be treated like visitors of consequence, little imagining that the giant was undertaking a horrid return for all his favours.

"Things went on this way for some time, the giant becoming daily more impatient to put his plan in execution. At last a favourable opportunity presented itself. Your father's house was at some distance from the sea-shore, but with a glass the coast could be seen distinctly. The giant was one day using the telescope; the wind was very high, and he saw a fleet of ships in distress off the rocks. He hastened to your father, mentioned the circumstance, and eagerly requested he would send all the servants he could spare to relieve the sufferers.

"Every one was instantly despatched, except the porter and your nurse. The giant then joined your father in the study, and appeared to be delighted. He really was so. Your father recommended a favourite book, and was handing it down, when the giant, taking the opportunity, stabbed him, and he instantly fell down dead. The giant

left the body, found the porter and nurse, and presently despatched them, being determined to have no living witnesses of his crimes.

"You were then only three months old. Your mother had you in her arms in a remote part of the house, and was ignorant of what was going on. She went into the study, but how was she shocked on discovering your father dead. She was stupefied with horror and grief, and was motionless. The giant, who was seeking her, found her in that state, and hastened to serve her and you as he had done your father, but she fell at his feet, and, in a pathetic manner, besought him to spare her life and yours.

"Remorse, for a moment, seemed to touch the barbarian's heart. He granted your lives, but first he made her take a most solemn oath never to inform you who your father was, or to answer any questions concerning him, assuring her that if she did he would certainly discover her and put both of you to death in the most cruel manner. Your mother took you in her arms and fled as quickly as possible. She was scarcely gone when the giant repented he had suffered her to escape. He would have pursued her instantly, but he had to provide for his own safety, as it was necessary he should be gone before the servants returned. Having gained your father's confidence he knew where to find all his treasure. He soon loaded himself and his wife, set the house

on fire in several places, and, when the servants returned, the house was burnt quite down to the ground.

"Your poor mother, forlorn, abandoned, and forsaken, wandered with you a great many miles from this scene of desolation. Fear added to her haste. She settled in the cottage where you were brought up, and it was entirely owing to her fear of the giant that she never mentioned your father to you.

"I became your father's guardian at his birth, but fairies have laws to which they are subject as well as mortals. A short time before the giant went to your father's I transgressed. My punishment was a suspension of power for a limited time—an unfortunate circumstance—for it totally prevented my succouring your father.

"The day on which you met the butcher, as you went to sell your mother's cow, my power was restored. It was I who secretly prompted you to take the beans in exchange for the cow.

"By my power the beanstalk grew to so great a height and formed a ladder. I need not add I inspired you with a strong desire to ascend the ladder.

"The giant lives in this country, and you are the person appointed to punish him for all his wickedness. You will have dangers and difficulties to encounter, but you must persevere in avenging the death of your father, or you will not prosper in any of your undertakings, but be always miserable.

"As to the giant's possessions, you may seize on all you can, for everything he has is yours though now you are unjustly deprived of it. One thing I desire. Do not let your mother know you are acquainted with your father's history till you see me again.

"Go along the direct road, and you will soon see the house where your cruel enemy lives. While you do as I order you I will protect and guard you, but, remember, if you dare disobey my commands, a most dreadful punishment awaits you."

When the fairy had concluded, she disappeared leaving Jack to pursue his journey. He walked on till after sunset when, to his great joy, he espied a large mansion. This agreeable sight revived his drooping spirits, and he redoubled his speed, and soon reached the house. A plain-looking woman was at the door, and Jack accosted her, begging she would give him a morsel of bread and a night's lodging.

She expressed the greatest surprise at seeing him, and said it was quite uncommon to see a human being near their house, for it was well known her husband was a large and very powerful giant, and that he would never eat anything but human flesh, if he could possibly get it; that he did not think anything of walking fifty miles to procure it, usually being out the whole day for that purpose.

This account greatly terrified Jack, but still he

hoped to elude the giant, and therefore he again entreated the woman to take him in for one night only, and hide him where she thought proper. The good woman at last suffered herself to be persuaded, for she was of a compassionate and generous disposition, and took him into the house.

First they entered a fine large hall, magnificently furnished. They then passed through several spacious rooms, all in the same style of grandeur, but they appeared to be quite forsaken and desolate.

A long gallery was next. It was very dark, with just light enough to show that, instead of a wall, on one side there was a grating of iron which parted off a dismal dungeon, from whence issued the groans of those poor victims whom the cruel giant reserved in confinement for his own voracious appetite.

Poor Jack was half dead with fear, and would have given the world to have been with his mother again, for he now began to fear that he should never see her more, and gave himself up for lost. He even mistrusted the good woman, and thought she had let him into the house for no other purpose than to lock him up among the unfortunate people in the dungeon.

At the further end of the gallery there was a spacious kitchen, and a very excellent fire was burning in the grate. The good woman bade Jack sit down, and gave him plenty to eat and drink. Jack,

not seeing anything here to make him uncomfortable, soon forgot his fear, and was just beginning to enjoy himself when he was aroused by a loud knocking at the street-door, which made the whole house shake. The giant's wife ran to secure Jack in the oven and then went to let her husband in.

Jack heard him accost her in a voice like thunder, saying—

"Wife, I smell fresh meat."

"Oh, my dear," replied she, "it is nothing but the people in the dungeon."

The giant appeared to believe her, and walked into the very kitchen where poor Jack was concealed, who shook, trembled, and was more terrified than he had yet been.

At last the monster seated himself quietly by the fireside, whilst his wife prepared supper. By degrees Jack recovered himself sufficiently to look at the giant through a small crevice. He was quite astonished to see what an amazing quantity he devoured, and thought he would never have done eating and drinking. When supper was ended the giant desired his wife to bring him his hen. A very beautiful hen was brought and placed on the table before him. Jack's curiosity was very great to see what would happen. He observed that every time the giant said "Lay," the hen laid an egg of solid gold.

The giant amused himself a long while with his

hen, and meanwhile his wife went to bed. At length the giant fell asleep by the fireside and snored like the roaring of a cannon. At daybreak Jack, finding the giant still asleep, and not likely to awaken soon, crept softly out of his hiding-place, seized the hen, and ran off with her.

He met with some difficulty in finding his way out of the house, but, at last, he reached the road in safety. He easily found his way to the beanstalk and descended it better and quicker than he had expected. His mother was overjoyed to see him. He found her crying bitterly, and lamenting his hard fate, for she concluded he had come to some shocking end through his rashness.

Jack was impatient to show his hen, and inform his mother how valuable it was.

"And now, mother," said Jack, "I have brought home that which will make us rich, and I hope to make some amends for the affliction I have caused you through my idleness, extravagance, and folly."

The hen produced as many golden eggs as they desired, which Jack and his mother sold, and so in a little time became possessed of as much riches as they wanted.

For some months Jack and his mother lived very happily together, but he, being very desirous of travelling, recollecting the fairy's commands, and fearing that if he delayed she would put her threats into execution, longed to climb the beanstalk and

pay the giant another visit, in order to carry away some more of his treasure, for, during the time that Jack was in the giant's mansion, while he lay concealed in the oven, he learned, from the conversation that took place between the giant and his wife, that he possessed some wonderful curiosities. Jack thought of his journey again and again, but still he could not summon resolution enough to break it to his mother, being well assured she would endeavour to prevent his going. However, one day he told her boldly that he must take a journey up the beanstalk. His mother begged and prayed him not to think of it, and tried all in her power to dissuade him. She told him that the giant's wife would certainly know him again, and the giant would desire nothing better than to get him into his power, that he might put him to a cruel death in order to be revenged for the loss of his hen.

Jack, finding that all his arguments were useless, pretended to give up the point, though he was resolved to go at all events. He had a dress prepared which would disguise him, and something to colour his skin, and he thought it impossible for any one to recollect him in this dress.

In a few mornings after this, he rose very early, changed his complexion, and, unperceived by any one, climbed the beanstalk a second time. He was greatly fatigued when he reached the top, and very hungry.

Having rested some time on on of the stones, he pursued his journey to the giant's mansion. He reached it late in the evening, and found the woman at the door as before. Jack addressed her, at the same time telling her a pitiful tale, and requesting she would give him some victuals and drink, and also a night's lodging.

She told him (what he knew very well before) about her husband's being a powerful and cruel giant and also how she one night admitted a poor, hungry, friendless boy, who was half dead with travelling, and that the ungrateful fellow had stolen one of the giant's treasures, ever since which her husband had been worse than before, had used her very cruelly, and continually upbraided her with being the cause of his loss.

Jack was at no loss to discover that he was attending to the account of a story in which he was the principal actor. He did his best to persuade the old woman to admit him, but found it a very hard task.

At last she consented, and as she led the way Jack observed that everything was just as he had found it before. She took him into the kitchen, and after he had done eating and drinking, she hid him in an old lumber closet. The giant returned at the usual time, and walked in so heavily that the house was shaken to the foundation. He seated himself by the fire, and, soon after, exclaimed—

"Wife, I smell fresh meat."

The wife replied it was the crows, which had brought a piece of raw meat and left it on the top of the house.

Whilst supper was preparing, the giant was very ill-tempered and impatient, frequently lifting up his hand to strike his wife for not being quick enough, but she was always so fortunate as to elude the blow. The giant was also continually upbraiding her with the loss of his wonderful hen.

The giant's wife, having set supper on the table, went to another apartment and brought from it a huge pie which she also placed before him.

When he had ended his plentiful supper and eaten till he was quite satisfied, he said to his wife—

"I must have something to amuse me, either my bags of money or my harp."

After a good deal of ill-humour, and after having teased his wife for some time, he commanded her to bring down his bags of gold and silver. Jack, as before, peeped out of his hiding place, and presently the wife brought two bags into the room. They were of a very large size. One was filled with new guineas, and the other with new shillings. They were placed before the giant, who began reprimanding his poor wife most severely for staying so long. She replied, trembling with fear, that they were so heavy she could scarcely lift them, and concluded by saying she would never again bring them downstairs,

adding that she had nearly fainted owing to their weight.

This so exasperated the giant that he raised his hand to strike her, but she escaped and went to bed, leaving him to count over his treasure by way of amusement.

The giant took his bags, and after turning them over and over to see they were in the same state he had left them, began to count their contents. First the bag which contained the silver was emptied, and the contents placed upon the table. Jack viewed the glittering heaps with delight, and most heartily wished them in his own possession. The giant (little thinking he was so narrowly watched) reckoned the silver over several times, and then, having satisfied himself that all was safe, put it into the bags again, which he made very secure.

The other bag was opened next, and the guineas placed upon the table. If Jack was pleased at the sight of the silver, how much more delighted must he have felt when he saw such a heap of glittering gold? He even had the boldness to think of gaining both bags, but, suddenly recollecting himself, he began to fear that the giant would sham sleep, the better to entrap any one who might be concealed.

When the giant had counted over the gold till he was tired, he put it up, if possible more secure than he had put up the silver before, and he then fell back on his chair by the fireside and fell asleep.

He snored so loud that Jack compared his noise to the roaring of the sea in a high wind, when the tide is coming in. At last Jack concluded him to be asleep and therefore secure. He stole out of his hiding-place and approached the giant, in order to carry off the two bags of money. Just as he laid his hand upon one of the bags a little dog, which he had not observed before, started from under the giant's chair and barked at Jack most furiously, who now gave himself up for lost. Fear rivetted him to the spot, and instead of endeavouring to escape he stood still, though expecting his enemy to awake every instant. Contrary, however, to his expectation the giant continued in a sound sleep, and the dog grew weary of barking. Jack now began to recollect himself, and, on looking around, saw a large piece of meat. This he threw to the dog, who instantly seized it, and took it into the lumber-closet which Jack had just left.

Finding himself delivered from a noisy and troublesome enemy, and seeing the giant did not awake, Jack boldly seized the bags, and, throwing them over his shoulders, ran out of the kitchen. He reached the street-door in safety, and found it quite daylight. On his way to the top of the beanstalk he found himself greatly incommoded with the weight of the money bags, and, really, they were so heavy he could scarcely carry them.

Jack was overjoyed when he found himself near

the beanstalk. He soon reached the bottom and ran to meet his mother. To his great surprise the cottage was deserted. He ran from one room to another without being able to find any one. He then hastened into the village, hoping to see some of his neighbours, who could inform him where he could find her.

An old woman at last directed him to a neighbouring house, where his mother was ill of a fever. He was greatly shocked on finding her apparently dying, and could scarcely bear his own reflections on knowing himself to be the cause of it.

On being informed of our hero's safe return, his mother, by degrees, revived, and gradually recovered. Jack presented her his two valuable bags, and they lived happy and comfortably. The cottage was rebuilt and well furnished.

For three years Jack heard no more of the beanstalk, but he could not forget it, though he feared making his mother unhappy. She would not mention the hated beanstalk, lest her doing so should remind him of taking another journey.

Notwithstanding the comforts Jack enjoyed at home, his mind continually dwelt upon the beanstalk, for the fairy's menaces in case of his disobedience were ever present to his mind and prevented him from being happy. He could think of nothing else. It was in vain he endeavoured to amuse himself. He became thoughtful, would arise

at the first dawn of day, and would view the beanstalk for hours together.

His mother discovered that something preyed heavily upon his mind, and endeavoured to discover the cause, but Jack knew too well what the consequence would be should he discover the cause of his melancholy to her. He did his utmost, therefore, to conquer the great desire he had for another journey up the beanstalk. Finding, however, that his inclination grew too powerful for him, he began to make secret preparations for his journey, and, on the longest day, arose as soon as it was light, ascended the beanstalk, and reached the top with some little trouble. He found the road, journey, etc., much as it was on the two former times. He arrived at the giant's mansion in the evening, and found his wife standing, as usual, at the door. Jack had disguised himself so completely that she did not appear to have the least recollection of him. However, when he pleaded hunger and poverty in order to gain admittance, he found it very difficult, indeed, to persuade her. At last he prevailed, and was concealed in the copper.

When the giant returned, he said—

"I smell fresh meat," but Jack felt composed, for the giant had said so before, and had been soon satisfied; however, the giant started up suddenly and searched all round the room. Whilst this was going forward Jack was exceedingly terrified, and

ready to die with fear, wishing himself at home a thousand times, but when the giant approached the copper, and put his hand upon the lid, Jack thought his death was certain. The giant ended his search there without moving the lid, and seated himself quietly by the fireside.

The giant at last ate a hearty supper, and when he had finished, he commanded his wife to fetch down his harp. Jack peeped under the copper lid and soon saw the most beautiful harp that could be imagined. It was placed by the giant on the table, who said—

"Play," and it instantly played of its own accord, without being touched. The music was uncommonly fine. Jack was delighted, and felt more anxious to get the harp into his possession than either of the former treasures.

The giant's soul was not attuned to harmony, and the music soon lulled him into a sound sleep. Now, therefore, was the time to carry off the harp. As the giant appeared to be in a more profound sleep than usual, Jack, soon determined, got out of the copper and seized the harp. The harp, however, was enchanted by a fairy, and it called out loudly—

"Master, master!"

The giant awoke, stood up, and tried to pursue Jack, but he had drunk so much that he could hardly stand. Poor Jack ran as fast as he could, and, in a little time, the giant recovered, sufficiently

to walk slowly, or rather, to reel after him. Had he been sober he must have overtaken Jack instantly, but as he then was, Jack contrived to be first at the top of the beanstalk. The giant called after him in a voice like thunder, and sometimes was very near him.

The moment Jack got down the beanstalk he called out for a hatchet, and one was brought him directly. Just at that instant the giant was beginning to descend, but Jack with his hatchet cut the beanstalk close off at the root, which made the giant fall headlong into the garden. The fall killed him, thereby releasing the world from a barbarous enemy.

Jack's mother was delighted when she saw the beanstalk destroyed. At this instant the fairy appeared. She first addressed Jack's mother, and explained every circumstance relating to the journeys up the beanstalk. The fairy then charged Jack to be dutiful to his mother, and to follow his father's good example, which was the only way to be happy. She then disappeared. Jack heartily begged his mother's pardon for all the sorrow and affliction he had caused her, promising most faithfully to be very dutiful and obedient to her for the future.

## JOHNNY REED'S CAT.

"YES, cats are queer folk, sure enough, and often know more than a simple beast ought to by knowledge that's rightly come by. There's that cat there, you've been looking at, will stand at a door on its hind legs with its front paws on the handle trying like a Christian to open the door, and mewling in a manner that's almost like talking. He's a London cat, he is, being brought me by a cousin who lives there, and is called Gilpin, after, I'm told, a mayor who was christened the same. He's a knowing cat, sure enough; but it's not the London cats that are cleverer than the country ones. Who knows, he may be a relative of Johnny Reed's own tom-cat himself."

"And who was Johnny Reed? and what was there remarkable about his cat?"

"Have you never heard tell of Johnny Reed's cat? It's an old tale they have in the north country, and it's true enough, though folk may not believe it in these days when the Bible's not gospel enough for some of them. I've heard my father often tell the story, and he came from Newcastle

way, which is the very part where Johnny Reed used to live, being a parish sexton in a village not far away.

"Well, Johnny Reed was the sexton, as I've already said, and he and his wife kept a cat, a well enough behaved creature, sure enough, and a beast as he had no fault to set on, saving a few of the tricks which all cats play at times, and which seem born in the blood of the creatures. It was all black except one white paw, and seemed as honest and decent a beast as could be, and Tom would as soon have suspected it of being any more than it really seemed to be as he would one of his own children themselves, like many other folk, perhaps, who, may be, have cats of the same kind, little thinking it.

"Well, the cat had been with him some years when a strange thing occurred.

"One night Johnny was going home late from the churchyard, where he had been digging a grave for a person who had died on a sudden, throwing the grave on Johnny's hands unexpectedly, so that he had to stop working at it by the light of a lantern to have it ready for the next day's burying. Well, having finished his work, and having put his tools in the shed in a corner of the yard, and having locked them up safe, he began to walk home pretty brisk, thinking would his wife be up and have a bit of fire for him, for the night was cold, a keen wind blowing over the fields.

"He hadn't gone far before he comes to a gate at the roadside, and there seemed to be a strange shadow about it, in which Johnny saw, as it might be, a lot of little gleaming fires dancing about, while some stood steady, just like flashes of light from little windows in buildings all on fire inside. Says Johnny to himself, for he was not a man to be easily frightened, being accustomed by his calling to face things which might upset other folk—

"'Hullo! What's here? Here's a thing I never saw before,' and with that he walks straight up to the gate, while the shadow got deeper and the fires brighter the nearer he came to it.

"Well, when he came right up to the gate he finds that the shadow was just none at all, but nine black cats, some sitting and some dancing about, and the lights were the flashes from their eyes. When he came nearer he thought to scare them off, and he calls out—

"'Sh—sh—sh,' but never a cat stirs for all of it.

"'I'll soon scatter you, you ugly varmin,' says Johnny, looking about him for a stone, which was not to be found, the night being dark and preventing him seeing one. Just then he hears a voice calling—

"'Johnny Reed!'

"'Hullo!' says he, 'who's that wants me?'

"'Johnny Reed,' says the voice again.

"'Well,' says Johnny, 'I'm here,' and looking round and seeing no one, for no one was about 'tis true. 'Was it one of you,' says he, joking like, to the cats, 'as was calling me?'

"'Yes, of course,' answers one of them, as plain as ever Christian spoke. 'It's me as has called you these three times.'

"Well, with that, you may be sure, Johnny begins to feel curious, for 'twas the first time he had ever been spoken to by a cat, and he didn't know what it might lead to exactly. So he takes off his hat to the cat, thinking that it was, perhaps, best to show it respect, and, seeing that he was unable to guess with whom he was dealing, hoping to come off all the better for a little civility.

"'Well, sir,' says he, 'what can I do for you?'

"'It's not much as I want with you,' says the cat, 'but it's better it'll be with you if you do what I tell you. Tell Dan Ratcliffe that Peggy Poyson's dead.'

"'I will, sir,' says Johnny, wondering at the same time how he was to do it, for who Dan Ratcliffe was he knew no more than the dead. Well, with that all the cats vanished, and Johnny, running the rest of the way home, rushes into his house, smoking hot from the fright and the distance he had to go over.

"'Nan,' says he to his wife, the first words he spoke, 'who's Dan Ratcliffe?'

"'Dan Ratcliffe,' says she. 'I never heard of him,

and don't know there's any one such living about here.'

"'No more do I,' says he, 'but I must find him wherever he is.'

"Then he tells his wife all about how he had met the cats, and how they had stopped him and given him the message. Well, his cat sits there in front of the fire looking as snug and comfortable as a cat could be, and nearly half-asleep, but when Johnny comes to telling his wife the message the cats had given him, then it jumped up on its feet, and looks at Johnny, and says—

"'What! is Peggy Poyson dead? Then it's no time for me to be here;' and with that it springs through the door and vanishes, nor was ever seen again from that day to this."

"And did the sexton ever find Dan Ratcliffe," I asked.

"Never. He searched high and low for him about, but no one could tell him of such a person, though Johnny looked long enough, thinking it might be the worse for him if he didn't do his best to please the cats. At last, however, he gave the matter up."

"Then, what was the meaning of the cat's message?"

"It's hard to tell; but many folk thought, and I'm inclined to agree with them, that Dan Ratcliffe was Johnny's own cat, and no one else, looking at

the way he acted, and no other of the name being known. Who Peggy Poyson was no one could tell, but likely enough it was some relative of the cat, or may be some one it was interested in, for it 's little we know concerning the creatures and their ways, and with whom and what they 're mixed up."

## LAME MOLLY.

Two Devonshire serving-maids declared, as an excuse perhaps for spending more money than they ought upon finery, that the pixies were very kind to them, and would often drop silver for their pleasure into a bucket of fair water, which they placed for the accommodation of those little beings every night in the chimney-corner before they went to bed. Once, however, it was forgotten; and the pixies, finding themselves disappointed by an empty bucket, whisked up-stairs to the maids' bedroom, popped through the keyhole, and began, in a very audible tone, to exclaim against the laziness and neglect of the damsels.

One of them, who lay awake and heard all this, jogged her fellow-servant, and proposed getting up immediately to repair the fault of omission; but the lazy girl, who liked not being disturbed out of a comfortable nap, pettishly declared "That, for her part, she would not stir out of bed to please all the pixies in Devonshire." The good-humoured damsel, however, got up, filled the bucket, and was rewarded by a handful of silver pennies found in it the next

morning. But, ere that time had arrived, what was her alarm, as she crept towards the bed, to hear all the elves in high and stern debate consulting as to what punishment should be inflicted on the lazy lass who would not stir for their pleasure.

Some proposed "pinches, nips, and bobs," others to spoil her new cherry-coloured bonnet and ribands. One talked of sending her the toothache, another of giving her a red nose, but this last was voted too severe and vindictive a punishment for a pretty young woman. So, tempering mercy with justice, the pixies were kind enough to let her off with a lame leg, which was so to continue only for seven years, and was alone to be cured by a certain herb, growing on Dartmoor, whose long and learned and very difficult name the elfin judge pronounced in a high and audible voice. It was a name of seven syllables, seven being also the number of years decreed for the chastisement.

The good-natured maid, wishing to save her fellow-damsel so long a suffering, tried with might and main to bear in mind the name of this potent herb. She said it over and over again, tied a knot in her garter at every syllable, in order to assist her memory, and thought she had the word as sure as her own name, and very possibly felt much more anxious about retaining the one than the other. At length she dropped asleep, and did not wake till the morning. Now, whether her head might be like

a sieve, that lets out as fast as it takes in, or whether the over-exertion to remember caused her to forget, cannot be determined, but certain it is when she opened her eyes, she knew nothing at all about the matter, excepting that Molly was to go lame on her right leg for seven long years, unless a herb with a strange name could be got to cure her. And lame she went for nearly the whole of that period.

At length (it was about the end of the time) a merry, squint-eyed, queer-looking boy started up one fine summer day, just as she went to pluck a mushroom, and came tumbling, head over heels, towards her. He insisted on striking her leg with a plant which he held in his hand. From that moment she got well, and lame Molly, as a reward for her patience in suffering, became the best dancer in the whole town at the celebrated festivities of May-day on the green.

## THE BROWN MAN OF THE MOORS.

In the year before the great rebellion two young men from Newcastle were sporting on the high moors above Elsdon, and, after pursuing their game several hours, sat down to dine in a green glen, near one of the mountain streams. After their repast, the younger lad ran to the brook for water, and, after stooping to drink, was surprised, on lifting his head again, by the appearance of a brown dwarf, who stood on a crag covered with brackens across the burn. This extraordinary personage did not appear to be above half the stature of a common man, but was uncommonly stout and broad-built, having the appearance of vast strength. His dress was entirely brown, the colour of the brackens, and his head covered with frizzled red hair. His countenance was expressive of the most savage ferocity, and his eyes glared like those of a bull.

It seems he addressed the young man, first threatening him with his vengeance for having trespassed on his demesnes, and asking him if he knew in whose presence he stood. The youth replied that he supposed him to be the lord of the

moors; that he had offended through ignorance; and offered to bring him the game he had killed. The dwarf was a little mollified by this submission, but remarked that nothing could be more offensive to him than such an offer, as he considered the wild animals as his subjects, and never failed to avenge their destruction. He condescended further to inform the young man that he was, like himself, mortal, though of years far exceeding the lot of common humanity, and that he hoped for salvation. He never, he added, fed on anything that had life, but lived in the summer on whortle berries, and in winter on nuts and apples, of which he had great store in the woods. Finally, he invited his new acquaintance to accompany him home and partake his hospitality, an offer which the youth was on the point of accepting, and was just going to spring across the brook (which if he had done, the dwarf would certainly have torn him to pieces) when his foot was arrested by the voice of his companion, who thought he had tarried long. On his looking round again "the wee brown man was fled."

The story adds that the young man was imprudent enough to slight the admonition, and to sport over the moors on his way homewards, but soon after his return he fell into a lingering disorder, and died within a year.

## HOW THE COBBLER CHEATED THE DEVIL.

It chanced that once upon a time long years ago, in the days when strange things used to happen in the world, and the devil himself used sometimes to walk about in it in a bare-faced fashion, to the distraction of all good and bad folk alike, he came to a very small town where he resolved to stay a while to play some of his tricks. How it was, whether the people were better or were worse than he expected to find them, whether they would not give way to him, or whether they went beyond him and outwitted him, I don't know, and so cannot say; but sure it is that in a short while he became terribly angry with the folk, and at length was so disgusted that he threatened he would make them repent their treatment of him, for he would punish them in a manner which should show them his power. With that he flew off in a fury, and the folk, knowing with whom they had to deal, were very sad thinking what terrible thing would overtake them, and at their wits' end to imagine how they might manage to escape the claws of the Evil One.

Accordingly it was decided to call a meeting of the townsfolk, to which all, old and young, should come to deliver their opinion as to the best course to be pursued, only those too old to walk, the sick, and the foolish, being not called to the council.

Very many different courses were proposed, and while these were being debated a man rushed into the hall where the council was held, and informed them that their enemy was coming, for he had himself seen him making his way to the town, bearing on his shoulder a stone almost big enough to bury the place under it. He reported that the devil was yet a long way off, for his load hampered him sadly and he could not travel fast.

What to do the councillors did not know, when suddenly there came amongst them a poor cobbler, whom they had forgot to call to the meeting, for he was, indeed, looked upon as only half-witted.

"I will go and meet him," said he, "and stop him coming here."

"You stop him!" cried they all; "it's mad you must be to think of it."

"I'll go all the same," said the cobbler, and without saying a word more he goes out and begins to make ready for his journey.

First of all he collected together as many old boots and shoes as he could find, and when he had got them all in a bundle, he finds out the man who had seen the devil coming on, and inquired of him

the way he should go to meet him. The man told him the road, and the cobbler set out. He walked, and walked, and walked, till at last he came to the devil, who was sitting by the roadside resting himself and trying to get cool, for the day was warm, and he was nearly worn out with carrying the big rock which lay beside him.

"Do you know such-and-such a place?" asks he of the man, naming the town he would be at.

"I do, indeed," says the man, "for I ought to, seeing I have lived in its neighbourhood these many years, and have only left there to travel here."

"And how many days have you been getting here?" asked the devil anxiously, for he had hoped he was near the end of his journey.

"Oh, days and days," replies the man. "See here," and he opens his bundle of old boots that he had ready,—"see here," says he, "these are the boots I've worn out on the hard road in coming from the place here."

"Have you, indeed!" says the devil, looking at them amazed, little thinking that the man was lying as he showed him pair after pair, all in holes and shreds. "Well, indeed, it must be a long way off," and he looks around him, and then at the rock, and thinks what a terrible long way he has had to bring it, and begins to doubt whether, after all, since he's still got so far to go, it's worth all the trouble.

"If it had been near," says he, "it would have

been a different thing, and I would have shown them what it is to treat me as they did, but as it 's so far off it 's another matter, and I don't think it 's worth the trouble."

So he just takes up the rock and flings it aside in a field, and goes off back again. So the cobbler came home, and told all the townsfolk what he had done, and how he had cheated the devil, and I can assure you that they all admired his cleverness, and the joke of tricking the devil as he had, nor did they allow him to lose in consequence of missing his day's work.

## THE TAVISTOCK WITCH.

An old witch in days of yore lived in the neighbourhood of Tavistock, and whenever she wanted money she would assume the shape of a hare, and would send out her grandson to tell a certain huntsman, who lived hard by, that he had seen a hare sitting at such a particular spot, for which he always received the reward of sixpence. After this deception had been practised many times, the dogs turned out' the hare pursued, often seen but never caught, a sportsman of the party began to suspect "that the devil was in the dance," and there would be no end to it. The matter was discussed, a justice consulted, and a clergyman to boot, and it was thought that however clever the devil might be, law and church combined would be more than a match for him. It was therefore agreed that, as the boy was singularly regular in the hour at which he came to announce the sight of the hare, all should be in readiness for a start the instant such information was given, and a neighbour of the witch, nothing friendly to her, promised to let the parties know directly that the old woman and her grandson left

the cottage and went off together, the one to be hunted, and the other to set on the hunt.

The news came, the hounds were unkennelled, and huntsmen and sportsmen set off with surprising speed. The witch, now a hare, and her little colleague in iniquity, did not expect so very speedy a turn out, so that the game was pursued at a desperate rate, and the boy, forgetting himself in a moment of alarm, was heard to exclaim—

"Run, granny, run; run for your life!"

At last the pursuers lost the hare, and she once more got safe into the cottage by a little hole in the bottom of the door, but not large enough to admit a hound in chase. The huntsman and the squires, with their train, lent a hand to break open the door, but could not do it till the parson and the justice came up, but as law and church were certainly designed to break through iniquity, even so did they now succeed in bursting the magic bonds that opposed them. Up-stairs they all went. There they found the old hag, bleeding and covered with wounds, and still out of breath. She denied she was a hare, and railed at the whole party.

"Call up the hounds," said the huntsman, "and let us see what they take her to be. Maybe we may yet have another hunt."

On hearing this, the old woman cried quarter. The boy dropped on his knees and begged hard for mercy. Mercy was granted on condition of its being

received with a good whipping, and the huntsman, having long practised amongst the hounds, now tried his hand on their game. Thus the old woman escaped a worse fate for the time being, but on being afterwards put on trial for bewitching a young woman, and making her spit pins, the above was given as evidence against her, and the old woman finished her days, like a martyr, at the stake.

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH

## THE WORM OF LAMBTON.

THE young heir of Lambton led a dissolute and evil course of life, equally regardless of the obligations of his high estate, and the sacred duties of religion. According to his profane custom, he was fishing on a Sunday, and threw his line into the river to catch fish, at a time when all good men should have been engaged in the solemn observance of the day. After having toiled in vain for some time, he vented his disappointment at his ill success, in curses loud and deep, to the great scandal of all who heard him, on their way to Holy Mass, and to the manifest peril of his own soul.

At length he felt something extraordinary tugging at his line, and, in the hope of catching a large fish, he drew it up with the utmost skill and care, yet it required all his strength to bring the expected fish to land.

What was his surprise and mortification, when, instead of a fish, he found that he had only caught a worm of most unseemly and disgusting appearance. He hastily tore it from his hook and threw it into a well hard by.

He again threw in his line, and continued to fish, when a stranger of venerable appearance, passing by, asked him—

"What sport?"

To which he replied—

"I think I've caught the devil;" and directed the inquirer to look into the well.

The stranger saw the worm, and remarked that he had never seen the like of it before—that it was like an eft, but that it had nine holes on each side of its mouth, and tokened no good.

The worm remained neglected in the well, but soon grew so large that it became necessary to seek another abode. It usually lay in the day-time coiled round a rock in the middle of the river, and at night frequented a neighbouring hill, twining itself around the base; and it continued to increase in length until it could lap itself three times around the hill.

It now became the terror of the neighbourhood, devouring lambs, sucking the cow's milk, and committing every species of injury on the cattle of the affrighted peasantry.

The immediate neighbourhood was soon laid waste, and the worm, finding no further support on the north side of the river, crossed the stream towards Lambton Hall, where the old lord was then living in grief and sorrow, the young heir of Lambton having repented him of his former sins, and gone to the wars in a far distant land.

The terrified household assembled in council, and it was proposed by the stewart, a man far advanced in years and of great experience, that the large trough which stood in the courtyard should be filled with milk. The monster approached and, eagerly drinking the milk, returned without inflicting further injury, to repose around its favourite hill.

The worm returned the next morning, crossing the stream at the same hour, and directing its way to the hall. The quantity of milk to be provided was soon found to be the product of nine cows, and if any portion short of this quantity was neglected or forgotten the worm showed the most violent signs of rage, by lashing its tail around the trees in the park, and tearing them up by the roots.

Many a gallant knight of undoubted fame and prowess sought to slay this monster which was the terror of the whole country side, and it is related that in these mortal combats, although the worm had been frequently cut asunder, yet the several parts had immediately reunited, and the valiant assailant never escaped without the loss of life or limb, so that, after many fruitless and fatal attempts to destroy the worm, it remained, at length, in tranquil possession of its favourite hill—all men fearing to encounter so deadly an enemy.

At length, after seven long years, the gallant heir of Lambton returned from the wars of Christendom, and found the broad lands of his ancestors laid waste

and desolate. He heard the wailings of the people, for their hearts were filled with terror and alarm. He hastened to the hall of his ancestors, and received the embraces of his aged father, worn out with sorrow and grief, both for the absence of his son, whom he had considered dead, and for the dreadful waste inflicted on his fair domain by the devastations of the worm.

He took no rest until he crossed the river to examine the worm, as it lay coiled around the base of the hill, and being a knight of tried valour and sound discretion, and hearing the fate of all those who had fallen in the strife, he consulted a Sibyl on the best means to be pursued to slay the monster.

He was told that he himself had been the cause of all the misery which had been brought upon the country, which inceased his grief and strengthened his resolution. He was also told that he must have his best suit of mail studded with spear-blades, and, taking his stand on the rock in the middle of the river, commend himself to Providence and the might of his sword, first making a solemn vow, if successful, to slay the first living thing he met, or, if he failed to do so, the Lords of Lambton for nine generations would never die in their beds.

He made the solemn vow in the chapel of his forefathers, and had his coat studded with the blades of the sharpest spears. He took his stand on the rock in the middle of the river, and unsheathing his

trusty sword, which had never failed him in time of need, he commended himself to the will of Providence.

At the accustomed hour the worm uncoiled its lengthened folds, and, leaving the hill, took its usual course towards Lambton Hall, and approached the rock where it sometimes reposed. The knight, nothing dismayed, struck the monster on the head with all his might and main, but without producing any other visible effect than irritating and vexing the worm, which, closing on the knight, clasped its frightful coils around him, and endeavoured to strangle him in its poisonous embrace.

The knight was, however, provided against this dangerous extremity, for, the more closely he was pressed by the worm, the more deadly were the wounds inflicted by his coat of spear-blades, until the river ran with gore.

The strength of the worm diminished as its efforts increased to destroy the knight, who, seizing a favourable opportunity, made such a good use of his sword that he cut the monster in two. The severed part was immediately carried away by the current, and the worm, being thus unable to reunite itself, was, after a long and desperate conflict, destroyed by the gallantry and courage of the knight of Lambton.

The afflicted household were devoutly engaged in prayer during the combat, but on the fortunate issue, the knight, according to promise, blew a blast

on his bugle to assure his father of his safety, and that he might let loose his favourite hound which was destined to be the sacrifice. The aged father, forgetting everything but his parental feelings, rushed forward to embrace his son.

When the knight beheld his father he was overwhelmed with grief. He could not raise his arm against his parent, but, hoping that his vow might be accomplished, and the curse averted by destroying the next living thing he met, he blew another blast on his bugle.

His favourite hound broke loose and bounded to receive his caresses, when the gallant knight, with grief and reluctance, once more drew his sword, still reeking with the gore of the monster, and plunged it into the heart of his faithful companion. But in vain—the prediction was fulfilled, and the Sibyl's curse pressed heavily on the house of Lambton for nine generations.

## THE OLD WOMAN AND THE CROOKED SIXPENCE.

An old woman was sweeping her house, and she found a crooked sixpence.

"What," says she, "shall I do with this sixpence? I will go to the market and buy a pig with it."

She went; and as she was coming home she came to a stile. Now the pig would not go over the stile. The woman went on a little further and met a dog—

"Dog," said she, "bite pig. Piggy won't go over the stile, and I shan't get home to-night."

But the dog would not bite the pig. The woman went on a little further, and she met a stick.

"Stick," said she, "beat dog. Dog won't bite pig, piggy won't go over stile, and I shan't get home to-night."

But the stick would not. The woman went on a little further, and she met a fire.

"Fire," said she, "burn stick. Stick won't beat dog, dog won't bite pig, piggy won't go over the stile, and I shan't get home to-night."

But the fire would not. The woman went on a little further and she met some water.

"Water," said she, "quench fire. Fire won't burn stick, stick won't beat dog," etc.

But the water would not. The woman went on a little further, and she met an ox.

"Ox," said she, "drink water. Water won't quench fire," etc.

But the ox would not. The woman went on again, and she met a butcher.

"Butcher," said she, "kill ox. Ox won't drink water," etc.

But the butcher would not. The woman went on a little further, and met a rope.

"Rope," said she, "hang butcher. Butcher won't kill ox," etc.

But the rope would not. Again the woman went on, and she met a rat.

"Rat," said she, "gnaw rope. Rope won't hang butcher," etc.

But the rat would not. The woman went on a little further, and met a cat.

"Cat," said she, "kill rat. Rat won't gnaw rope," etc.

"Oh," said the cat, "I will kill the rat if you will fetch me a basin of milk from the cow over there."

The old woman went to the cow and asked her to let her have some milk for the cat.

"No," said the cow; "I will let you have no milk unless you bring me a mouthful of hay from yonder stack."

Away went the old woman to the stack and fetched the hay and gave it to the cow. Then the cow gave her some milk, and the old woman took it to the cat.

When the cat had lapped the milk, the cat began to kill the rat, the rat began to gnaw the rope, the rope began to hang the butcher, the butcher began to kill the ox, the ox began to drink the water, the water began to quench the fire, the fire began to burn the stick, the stick began to beat the dog, the dog began to bite the pig, and piggy, in a fright, jumped over the stile, and so, after all, the old woman got safe home that night.

## THE YORKSHIRE BOGGART.

A BOGGART intruded himself, upon what pretext or by what authority is unknown, into the house of a quiet, inoffensive, and laborious farmer; and, when once it had taken possession, it disputed the right of domicile with the legal mortal tenant, in a very unneighbourly and arbitrary manner. In particular, it seemed to have a great aversion to children. As there is no point on which a parent feels more acutely than that of the maltreatment of his offspring, the feelings of the father, and more particularly of his good dame, were daily, ay, and nightly, harrowed up by the malice of this malignant and invisible boggart (a boggart is seldom visible to the human eye, though it is frequently seen by cattle, particularly by horses, and then they are said to "take the *boggle*," a Yorkshireism for a shying horse). The children's bread and butter would be snatched away, or their porringers of bread and milk would be dashed down by an invisible hand; or if they were left alone for a few minutes, they were sure to be found screaming with terror on the return of the parents, like the farmer's children in the tale

of the *Field of Terror*, whom the "drudging goblin" used to torment and frighten when he was left alone with them.

The stairs led up from the kitchen; a partition of boards covered the ends of the steps, and formed a closet beneath the staircase; a large round knot was accidentally displaced from one of the boards of this partition. One day the farmer's youngest boy was playing with the shoe-horn, and, as children will do, he stuck the horn into this knot-hole. Whether the aperture had been found by the boggart as a peep-hole to watch the motions of the family, or whether he wished to amuse himself, is uncertain, but sure it is the horn was thrown back with surprising precision at the head of the child. It was found that as often as the horn was replaced in the hole, so surely it was ejected with a straight aim at the offender's head. Time at length made familiar this wonderful occurrence, and that which at the first was regarded with terror, became at length a kind of amusement with the more thoughtless and daring of the family. Often was the horn slipped slyly into the hole, and the boggart never failed to dart it out at the head of one or the other, but most commonly he or she who placed it there was the mark at which the invisible foe launched the offending horn. They used to call this, in their provincial dialect, "laking wit boggart," *i.e.*, playing with the boggart. As if enraged at these liberties

taken with his boggartship, the goblin commenced a series of night disturbances. Heavy steps, as of a person in wooden clogs, were often heard clattering down the stairs in the dead hour of darkness, and the pewter and earthen dishes appeared to be dashed on the kitchen floor, though, in the morning, all were found uninjured on their respective shelves.

The children were chiefly marked out as objects of dislike by their unearthly tormenter. The curtains of their beds would be violently pulled backward and forward. Anon, a heavy weight, as of a human being, would press them nearly to suffocation. They would then scream out for their "daddy" and "mammy," who occupied the adjoining room, and thus the whole family was disturbed night after night. Things could not long go on after this fashion. The farmer and his good dame resolved to leave a place where they had not the least shadow of rest or comfort.

The farmer, whose name was George Gilbertson, was following, with his wife and family, the last load of furniture, when they met a neighbouring farmer, whose name was John Marshall, between whom and the unhappy tenant the following colloquy took place—

"Well, George, and soa you 're leaving t' ould hoose at last?"

"Heigh, Johnny, ma lad, I 'm forc'd till it, for that boggart torments us soa we can neither rest

neet nor day for't. It seems loike to have such a malice again't poor bairns. It ommost kills my poor dame here at thoughts on 't, and soa, ye see, we 're forc'd to flitt like."

He had got thus far in his complaint when, behold! a shrill voice, from a deep upright churn, called out—

"Ay, ay, George, we 're flitting, you see."

"Confound thee," says the poor farmer, "if I 'd known thou 'd been there I wadn't ha stirrid a peg. Nay, nay, it 's to na use, Mally," turning to his wife, "we may as weel turn back again to t' ould hoose, as be tormented in another that 's not sa convenient."

They are said to have turned back, but the boggart and they afterwards came to a better understanding, though it long continued its trick of shooting the horn from the knot-hole.

## THE DUERGAR.

THE following encounters with the *duergar*, a species of mischievous elves, are said to have taken place on Simonside Hills, a mountainous district between Rothbury and Elsdon in Northumberland.

A person well acquainted with the locality went out one night to amuse himself with the pranks of these mysterious beings. When he had wandered a considerable time, he shouted loudly—

"Tint! tint!" and a light appeared before him, like a burning candle in the window of a shepherd's cottage. Thither, with great caution, he bent his steps, and speedily approached a deep slough, from whence a quantity of moss or peat had been excavated, and which was now filled with mud and water. Into this he threw a piece of turf which he raised at his feet, and when the sound of the splash echoed throughout the surrounding stillness, the decoying light was extinguished. The adventurer retraced his steps, overjoyed at his dexterity in outwitting the fiendish imps, and in a moment of exultation, as if he held all the powers of darkness

in defiance, he again cried to the full extent of his voice—

"Tint! tint!"

His egotism subsided, however, more quickly than it arose, when he observed three of the little demons, with hideous visages, approach him, carrying torches in their diminutive hands, as if they wished to inspect the figure of their enemy. He now betook himself to the speed of his heels for safety, but found that an innumerable multitude of the same species were gathering round him, each with a torch in one hand and a short club in the other, which they brandished with such gestures, as if they were resolved to oppose his flight, and drive him back into the morass. Like a knight of romance he charged with his oaken staff the foremost of his foes, striking them, as it seemed, to the earth, for they disappeared, but his offensive weapon encountered in its descent no substance of flesh or bone, and beyond its sweep the demons appeared to augment both in size and number. On witnessing so much of the unearthly, his heart failed him. He sank down in a state of stupor, nor was he himself again till the gray light of the morning dispersed his unhallowed opponents, and revealed before him the direct way to his own dwelling.

Another time, a traveller, wandering over these mountain solitudes, had the misfortune to be benighted, and, perceiving near him a glimmering

light, he hastened thither and found what appeared to be a hut, on the floor of which, between two rough, gray stones, the embers of a fire, which had been supplied with wood, were still glowing and unconsumed. He entered, and the impression on his mind was that the place had been deserted an hour or two previously by gipsies, for on one side lay a couple of old gate-posts ready to be split up for fuel, and a quantity of refuse brush-wood, such as is left from besom making, was strewn upon the floor. With this material he trimmed the fire, and had just seated himself on one of the stones, when a diminutive figure in human shape, not higher than his knee, came waddling in at the door, and took possession of the other. The traveller, being acquainted with the manner in which things of this description ought to be regarded, retained his self-possession, kept his seat, and remained silent, knowing that if he rose up or spoke, his danger would be redoubled, and as the flame blazed up he examined minutely the hollow eyes, the stern vindictive features, and the short, strong limbs, of the visitor before him. By degrees he perceived that the hut afforded little or no shelter from the cold night air, and as the energy of the fire subsided he lifted from the floor a piece of wood, broke it over his knee, and laid the fragments upon the red-hot embers. Whether this operation was regarded by his strange neighbour as a species of insult we cannot say, but

the demon seized, as if in bitter mockery, one of the gate-posts, broke it likewise over its knee, and laid the pieces on the embers in the same manner. The other having no wish to witness a further display of such marvellous agency, thenceforth permitted the fire to die away, and kept his position in darkness and silence, till the fair dawn of returning day made him aware of the extreme danger to which he was exposed. He saw a quantity of white ashes before him, but the grim dwarfish intruder, with the roof and walls of the hut, were gone, and he himself, sat upon a stone, sure enough, but it formed one of the points of a deep, rugged precipice, over which the slightest inadvertent movement had been the means of dashing him to pieces.

## THE BARN ELVES.

AN honest Hampshire farmer was sore distressed by the nightly unsettling of his barn. However straightly, over night, he laid his sheaves on the threshing floor, for the application of the morning's flail, when morning came all was topsy-turvy, higgledy-piggledy, though the door remained locked, and there was no sign whatever of irregular entry.

Resolved to find out who played him these mischievous pranks, Hodge couched himself one night deeply among the sheaves, and watched for the enemy. At length midnight arrived. The barn was illuminated as if by moonbeams of wonderful brightness, and through the keyhole came thousands of elves, the most diminutive that could be imagined. They immediately began their gambols among the straw, which was soon in the most admired disorder. Hodge wondered, but interfered not, but at last the supernatural thieves began to busy themselves in a way still less to his taste, for each elf set about conveying the crop away, a straw at a time, with astonishing activity and perseverance. The keyhole was still their port of egress and regress, and it

resembled the aperture of a beehive, on a sunny day in June. The farmer was rather annoyed at seeing his grain vanish in this fashion, when one of the fairies, while hard at work, said to another, in the tiniest voice that ever was heard—

"I weat; you weat?" (I sweat; do you sweat?)

Hodge could contain himself no longer. He leapt out, crying—

"The deuce sweat ye! Let me get among ye."

The fairies all flew away so frightened that they never disturbed the barn any more.

## LEGENDS OF KING ARTHUR.

IMMEMORIAL tradition has asserted that King Arthur, his queen Guinevere, court of lords and ladies, and his hounds, were enchanted in some cave of the crags, or in a hall below the castle of Sewingshields, and would continue entranced there till some one should first blow a bugle-horn that lay on a table near the entrance into the hall, and then "with the sword of stone" cut a garter, also placed there beside it. But none had ever heard where the entrance to this enchanted hall was, till a farmer at Sewingshields, about fifty years since, was sitting knitting on the ruins of the castle, and his clew fell and ran downwards through a bush of briars and nettles, as he supposed, into a deep subterranean passage. Full in the faith that the entrance into King Arthur's hall was now discovered, he cleared the briary portal of its weeds and rubbish, and entering a vaulted passage, followed, in his darkling way, the web of his clew. The floor was infested with toads and lizards, and the dark wings of bats, disturbed by his unhallowed intrusion, flitted fearfully around him. At length his sinking faith was strengthened by a

dim, distant light, which, as he advanced, grew gradually lighter, till, all at once, he entered a vast and vaulted hall, in the centre of which a fire without fuel, from a broad crevice in the floor, blazed with a high and lambent flame, that showed all the carved walls and fretted roof, and the monarch and his queen and court reposing around in a theatre of thrones and costly couches. On the floor, beyond the fire, lay the faithful and deep-toned pack of thirty couple of hounds, and on the table, before it, the spell-dissolving horn, sword, and garter. The farmer reverently but firmly grasped the sword, and as he drew it leisurely from its rusty scabbard, the eyes of the monarch and his courtiers began to open, and they rose till they sat upright. He cut the garter, and, as the sword was being slowly sheathed, the spell assumed its ancient power, and they all gradually sank to rest, but not before the monarch lifted up his eyes and hands, and exclaimed—

"O woe betide that evil day
On which this witless wight was born
Who drew the sword—the garter cut,
But never blew the bugle-horn."

Of this favourite tradition, the most remarkable variation is respecting the place where the farmer descended. Some say that after the king's denunciation, terror brought on loss of memory, and the farmer was unable to give any correct account of

his adventure, or the place where it occurred. All agree that Mrs. Spearman, the wife of another and more recent occupier of the estate, had a dream in which she saw a rich hoard of treasure among the ruins of the castle, and that for many days together she stood over workmen employed in searching for it, but without success.

Another version of the story has less of "the pomp of sceptred state" than the preceding, and has evidently sprung from a baser original, but its verity is not the less to be depended upon.

A shepherd one day, in quest of a strayed sheep on the crags, had his attention aroused by the scene around him assuming an appearance he had never before witnessed. There seemed to be about it a more than wonted vividness, and such a deep solemnity hung over its aspect, that its features became, as it were, palpably impressed upon his mind. While he was musing upon this unexpected occurrence, his steps were arrested by a ball of thread. This he laid hold of, and, pursuing the path it pointed out, found it led into a cavern, in the recesses of which, as the guiding line used by miners in their explorations of devious passages, it appeared to lose itself. As he approached, he felt perforce constrained to follow the strange conductor, that had so marvellously come into his hands. After passing through a long and dreary vestibule, he entered into an apartment in the interior. An immense

fire blazed on the hearth, and cast its broad flashes with a wild, unearthly glare, to the remotest corner of the chamber. Over it was placed a huge caldron, as if preparations were being made for a feast on an extensive scale. Two hounds lay couchant on either side of the fire-place, in the stillness of unbroken slumber. The only remarkable piece of furniture in the apartment was a table covered with green cloth. At the head of the table, a being, considerably advanced in years, of a dignified mien, and clad in the habiliments of war, sat, as it were, fast asleep, in an arm-chair. At the other end of the table lay a horn and a sword. Notwithstanding these signs of life, there prevailed a dead silence throughout the chamber, the very feeling of which made the shepherd reflect that he had advanced far beyond the limits of human experience, and that he was now in the presence of objects that belonged more to death than to life. The very idea made his flesh creep. He, however, had sufficient fortitude to advance to the table and lift the horn. The hounds pricked up their ears most fearfully, and the grisly veteran started up on his elbow, and raising his half-unwilling eyes, told the staggered hind that if he would blow the horn and draw the sword, he would confer upon him the honours of knighthood to last through time. Such unheard-of dignities, from a source so ghastly, either met with no appreciation from the awe-stricken swain, or the terror of finding

himself alone in the company, it might be of malignant phantoms, who were only tempting him to his ruin, became too urgent to be resisted, and, therefore, proposing to divide the peril with a comrade, he groped his darkling way, as best his quaking limbs could support him, back to the blessed daylight. On his return, with a reinforcement of strength and courage, all traces of the former scene had disappeared. The crags presented their usual cheerful and quiet aspect, and every vestige of the opening of a cavern was obliterated. Thus failed another of the repeated opportunities for releasing the spell-bound king of Britain from the "charmed sleep of ages." Within his rocky chamber he still sleeps on, as tradition tells, till the appointed hour; or if invited by his enchantress to participate in the illusions of the fairy festival, it has charms for him no longer. "Wasted with care," he sits beside her —the banquet untasted—the pageantry unmasked—

> ". . . By constraint
> Her guest, and from his native land withheld
> By sad necessity."

# SILKY.

ABOUT the commencement of the present century the inhabitants of the quiet village of Black Heddon, near Stamfordham, and of its vicinity, who lived, as most other villagers do, with all possible harmony amongst themselves, and relishing no more external disturbance than was consistent with their gentle and sequestered mode of existence, were dreadfully annoyed by the pranks of a preternatural being called Silky. This name it had obtained from its manifesting a marked predilection to make itself visible in the semblance of a female dressed in silk. Many a time, when one of the more timorous of the community had a night journey to perform, have they unawares and invisibly been dogged and watched by this spectral tormentor, who, at the dreariest part of the road—the most suitable for thrilling surprises—would suddenly break forth in dazzling splendour. If the person happened to be on horseback, a sort of exercise for which she evinced a strong partiality, she would unexpectedly seat herself behind, "rattling in her silks." There, after enjoying a comfortable ride, with instantaneous

abruptness she would, like a thing destitute of continuity, dissolve away and become incorporate with the nocturnal shades, leaving the bewildered horseman in blank amazement.

At Belsay, some two or three miles from Black Heddon, she had a favourite resort. This was a romantic crag finely studded with trees, under the gloomy umbrage of which, "like one forlorn," she loved to wander all the live-long night. Here often has the belated peasant, with awe-stricken vision, beheld her dimly through the sombre twilight as if engaged in splitting great stones, or hewing with many a repeated stroke some stately "monarch of the grove." While he thus stood and gazed, and listened to intimations, impossible to be misapprehended, of the dread reality of that mysterious being, concerning whom so various conjectures were awake, all at once, excited by that wondrous agency, he would hear the howling of a resistless tempest rushing through the woodland—the branches creaking in violent concussion, or rent into pieces by the impetuous fury of the blast—while, to the eye, not a leaf was seen to quiver, or a pensile spray to bend. The bottom of this crag is washed by a picturesque lake or fish-pond, at whose outlet is a waterfall, over which a venerable tree, sweeping its leafy arms, adds impressiveness to the scene. Amid the complicated and contorted limbs of this tree, Silky possessed a rude chair, where she was wont, in

her moody moments, to sit—wind-rocked—enjoying the rustling of the storm in the dark woods, or the gush of the cascade. The tree, so consecrated in the sympathies and terrors of the people of the vicinity, has been preserved. Though now (1842) no longer tenanted by its aerial visitant, it yet spreads majestically its time-hallowed canopy over the spot, awakening in the love-versed rustic, when the winter's wind waves gusty and sonorous through its leafless boughs, the soul-harrowing recollection of the exploits of the ancient fay,—but in the spring-time, beautiful with the full-flushed verdure of that exuberant season, recipient of the kindling emotions of reverence and affection. It still bears the name of "Silky's seat," in memory of its once wonderful occupant.

Silky exercised a marvellous influence over the brute creation. Horses, which indisputably possess a discernment of spirits superior to that of man, and are more sharp-sighted in the dark, were in an extraordinary degree sensitive of her presence and control. Having once perceived the effects of her power she seems to have had a perverse pleasure in meddling with and arresting those poor defenceless animals, while engaged in the most exemplary performance of their labours. When this misfortune occurred there was no remedy that brute-force could devise. Expostulation, soothing, whipping, and kicking, were all exerted in vain to make the restive

beast resume the proper and intended direction. The ultimate resource, unless it might be the whim of Silky to revoke the spell, was the magic dispelling witchwood, which, it is satisfactory to learn, was of unfailing efficacy. One poor wight, a farm-servant, was once the selected victim of her mischievous frolics. He had to go to a colliery at some distance for coals, and it was late in the evening before he could return. Silky, with spirit-like prescience, having intimation of the circumstance, waylaid him at a bridge—a "ghastly, ghost-alluring edifice," since called "Silky's Brig," lying a little to the south of Black Heddon, on the road between that place and Stamfordham. Just as he had arrived at "the height of that bad eminence," the keystone, horses and cart became fixed and immovable as fate. In that melancholy plight might both man and horses have continued—quaking, and sweating, and paralysed—till the morning light had thrown around them its mantle of protection—had not a neighbour's servant come to the rescue, who opportunely carried some of the potent witchwood (mountain-ash) about his person. On the arrival of this seasonable aid, the perplexed driver rallied his scattered senses, and the helpless animals, being duly seasoned after the fashion prescribed on such occasions, he had the heart-felt satisfaction of seeing them apply themselves, with the customary alacrity, to the draught. The charm was effectually over-

come, and in a short time both the man and the coals reached home in safety. Ever afterwards, however, as long as he lived, he took the precaution of rendering himself spell-proof, by being furnished with a sufficient quantity of witchwood, being by no means disposed that Silky should a second time amuse herself at his expense and that of his team.

She was wayward and capricious. Sometimes she installed herself in the office of that old familiar Lar—Brownie, but, with characteristic misdirection, in a manner exactly the reverse of that useful species of hobgoblin. Here it may be remarked that, throughout her disembodied career, she can scarcely be said to have performed one benevolent action for the sake of its moral qualities. She had, from first to last, a perpetual latent hankering for mischief, and gloried in withering surprises and unforeseen movements. As is customary with that "sturdy fairy," as she is designated by the great English Lexicographer, her works were performed at night, or between the hours of sunset and day-dawn. If the good old dames had thoroughly cleaned their houses, which country people make a practice of doing, especially on Saturdays, so that they may have a comfortable and decent appearance on the Sabbath-day, after they had retired to rest, Silky would silently turn everything topsy-turvy, and the morning presented a scene of indescribable confusion.

On the contrary, if the house had been left in a disorderly state, a plan which the folk generally found it best to adopt, everything would have been arranged with the greatest nicety.

At length a term had arrived to her erratic course, and both she and the peaceably disposed inhabitants whom she disquieted obtained the repose so long mutually desired. She abruptly disappeared. It had long been surmised, by those who paid attention to those dark matters, that she was the troubled phantom of some person, who had died very miserable, in consequence of having great treasure, which, before being taken by her mortal agony, had not been disclosed, and on that account Silky could not rest in her grave. About the period referred to a domestic female servant being alone in one of the rooms of a house in Black Heddon, was frightfully alarmed by the ceiling above suddenly giving way, and from it there dropped, with a prodigious clash, something quite black, shapeless, and uncouth. The servant did not stop to scrutinise an object so hideous and startling, but fled to her mistress, screaming at the pitch of her voice—

"The deevil's in the house! The deevil's in the house! He's come through the ceiling!"

With this terrible announcement the whole family were speedily convoked, and great was the consternation at the idea of the foe of mankind being amongst them in visible form. In this appalling extremity,

a considerable time elapsed before any one could brace up courage to face the enemy, or be prevailed on to go and inspect the cause of their alarm. At last the mistress, who chanced to be the most stout-hearted, ventured into the room when, instead of the personage, on account of whom such awful apprehensions were entertained, a great dog or calf-skin lay on the floor, sufficiently black and uncomely, but filled with gold.

After this Silky was never more heard or seen. Her destiny was accomplished, her spirit laid, and she now sleeps with her ancestors.

Printed by T. and A. Constable, Printers to Her Majesty,
*at the Edinburgh University Press.*

18 BURY STREET,
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